



Council eases street controls after traders object

# U-TURN OVER DELIVERY BAN

Report by Richard Guttridge

**DUDLEY Council has backed down over a controversial plan to ban deliveries in Pensnett High Street after it prompted a backlash from businesses.**

A traffic order stopping lorries and vans from stopping on High Street was due to come into force as part of a multi-million scheme to improve traffic flow along the busy route on the western side of the borough.

But traders feared the move could have had a major impact on their businesses and launched an objection against the ban. Dudley Council

has now agreed to only stop loading during peak times in mornings and afternoons.

Roads bosses had wanted to keep High Street clear of obstructions as part of its year-long improvement scheme, which has seen the highway widened and new traffic lights installed. They have been forced to make a U-turn on the plans to

**Pensnett High Street**

stop loading between 7am and 7pm on week-days due to opposition from business owners, who submitted a petition signed by 42 people.

## Revised

Under revised proposals loading will now only be banned between 7.30am and 9.30am and 4pm and 6.30pm in a bid to avoid rush-hour congestion.

A report to the council said: "Business owners on High Street raised concerns about potentially losing trade and expressed a real need for a loading bay for deliveries and customers."

Councillor Karen Shakespeare, boss of environmental services, said the authority had listened to traders. She added: "The Pensnett improvement scheme is progressing well and we are grateful to everyone for bearing with us during this important work. We have listened to local traders and residents throughout this work and have acted on the feedback."

## WORKS STARTS ON TRIBUTE TO BRITISH 'SCHINDLER'



The statue of Frank Foley sees him sitting on a bench in the park, which is near his former home, right, hero Frank Foley

WORK has started on a statue honouring a hero dubbed the 'British Schindler'.

Artist Andy de Comyn has begun modelling the statue of Frank Foley, who repeatedly risked his life to save thousands of Jews in Nazi Germany.

Major Foley, who retired to Stourbridge and is buried in the town, worked at the British Embassy in Berlin before the Second World War. He provided thousands of Jewish

families with the documents they needed to escape Germany during the 1930s by bending the rules when stamping passports or issuing visas. He also hid Jews in his own home and even went into Sachsenhausen concentration camp with visas to enable prisoners to leave.

The memorial to Major Foley will be in Mary Stevens Park, close to his former home in Evesson Road and the cemetery where he is buried. It is due to be unveiled in June.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin led the campaign for a permanent tribute, persuading then Chancellor George Osborne to stump up £40,000 to cover the costs.

Mr Austin said: "I am absolutely delighted that work has started and the statue should be ready next summer so people can learn about him and our country's role in fighting for freedom, democracy and tolerance against Nazi Germany."

## HEALTH

### Hospital failings over infections

STAFF at Russells Hall Hospital failed to take sufficient action to prevent the spread of infections on wards, an investigation has found.

NHS experts flagged up 'serious failings' with 'basic infection prevention practices' and said staff did not know what to do to prevent the spread of infections.

Infection control practices were scrutinised during an inspection at the hospital by NHS Improvement.

The Dudley Group NHS Trust, which runs Russells Hall, has been given a red RAG rating for infection control, meaning urgent action should be taken, and chiefs have been told staff must receive training annually rather than the recommended every three years.

A ward had to be closed in October following a norovirus outbreak at the Dudley hospital. Thirty six patients were written to earlier this year amid fears tuberculosis could have spread from a patient.

Dudley Group NHS Trust chief executive Diane Wake said: "We invited NHS Improvement to visit us to give us an objective view of our infection prevention and control procedures. It was disappointing that they found some areas where we could do better and we are working hard to make improvements."

## ATTACK

### Police appeal after boy stabbed in arm

POLICE are appealing for information after a teenager was stabbed in Stourbridge.

West Midlands Police say they received a 999 call from a member of the public reporting a group of up to 20 schoolchildren outside the Mercedes dealership in St Johns Road, Stourbridge, at around 3.15pm on Friday.

A boy, believed to be 14-years-old, suffered a cut to his arm which was bandaged by a member of the public. The boy was taken to hospital for treatment but is not understood to be seriously hurt.

Anyone who saw the incident or has information is asked to call police on 101.

## INSIDE

### THE BOYS ARE BACK IN TOWN



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# Transit camp could be in use by May



Land is often occupied

A TEMPORARY travellers transit site will be set up in the borough within months, say bosses at Dudley Council. The local authority has said it is 'committed' to trying to provide a transit site by May or June next year.

It comes as protesters said the controversial plans for the favourite potential site in Budden Road, Coseley, should be scrapped over contamination fears, see story below.

Coseley East ward councillor Melvyn Mottram said: "It's got to be discussed with the residents, that seems to be like they have already made their mind up.

"If they're doing it that quick that means they have already made their mind up, no matter what the local councillors and the residents want to discuss with them and that doesn't surprise me."

The council report follows a meeting of the cabinet last week where it was acknowledged that the Budden Road spot favoured for the transit site.

The council's pre-meeting papers state: "Based upon the estimated cost of provision and the saving that can be achieved as a result of the reduction in the number of incursions likely to be

experienced, together with the cost of impact on other services, it is likely that all 'up front' costs will be covered within two-to-three years. The council has committed to try to provide a transit site by May/June 2018 when the main 'body' of incursions tends to begin."

Council leader Patrick Harley, at a meeting of the cabinet, said: "It is about providing a response to the problem that we have, when we're spending approximately £150,000 a year to clean the mess that some of the groups leave behind."

It will next be discussed on Monday.

# Travellers site is on 'contaminated' land

**CONTROVERSIAL** plans for a travellers' transit camp in Coseley should be ditched because the land is contaminated, says local councillors.

The Dudley Council-owned land in Budden Road is the favoured spot for travellers to be moved to, as part of new measures to end illegal occupations faster.

The Coseley site has been described as the most favoured in a shortlist of sites, which also include several others in Coseley and Lye. Those against the plan warn that the Budden Road site could pose a health hazard to traveller families as it has been recorded as containing foundry and construction waste.

Coseley East's Councillor Susan Ridney said: "If we're not prepared to even put a football pitch on there how can we put caravans with babies and children on there. This is contaminated land, whatever your views about traveller families, it's wrong to put them on there."

She added: "We need houses rather than the travellers site. If they're going to put money into cleaning that site up now, let's clean it up and put housing on it."

Coseley councillor Melvyn Mottram said: "We know that there has got to be somewhere for travellers, we can understand the benefits of that but at the end of the day that land is highly contaminated."

Ten possible locations for the proposed travellers' site also include Blowers Green Road in Dudley, Delf Lane in Wethymoor, and The Straits, Gornal.

Council leader Patrick Harley said: "This is not about spending taxpayers money to provide safe havens for travellers to come and visit Dudley. A transit site is there as a deterrent to try and prevent these groups from having illegal encampments."



Melvyn Mottram

## Big freeze fails to stop lights event



MP Mike Wood, Mayor of Dudley Dave Tyler, Melanie Dunn and Ellis Heathcock push the button

MORE than 100 people braved the sub-zero temperature to witness the Christmas lights being switched on at Brierley Hill.

The official honours were shared between Dudley South MP Mike Wood, Dudley Mayor, Councillor Dave Tyler, and competition winner Melanie Dunne.

A big cheer greeted the sight of the 15ft fir tree on Saturday when it was suddenly lit up by white fairy lights.

The crowd of around 150 people at the Moor Centre had been entertained by fire-eaters and funfair rides in the build-up to the big switch-on.

Competition winner Melanie came top in a game set up by the council who published photographs of elves in various locations around the town, inviting people to guess where they were.

She took her nephew Ellis Heathcock to join her in switching on the lights.

# Inquest has opened into the death of missing man

AN INQUEST into the death of a 43-year-old Stourbridge man whose disappearance sparked a major nationwide search has opened.

The South Staffordshire Coroner has opened the inquest into the death of Matthew Gill, who was known to many by the nickname Liggy.

Mr Gill, who was found dead on land off Prestwood Drive, near Stourton, had been missing from his Stourbridge home since October 6. The cause of death has been recorded as hanging.

The disappearance of the Kidderminster B&Q employee sparked a search which saw football clubs - including Albion and Wolves - and businesses offering their help.

Just a week before he was found, Kingswinford logistics firm JJX Logistics placed a huge missing poster on the side of one of its lorries in a bid to find the missing man. The firm had plans to send the truck to Europe.

A huge online appeal was also launched, with the Facebook page Find-Liggy gaining more than 9,000 followers.

But the search came to a tragic end when Mr Gill's body was found on the afternoon of Sunday November 26 close to where his car, a silver Smart Roadster, had been found earlier in the search.

The inquest was adjourned and a provisional date of March 6 has been given for the full inquest.

# Keys are handed over for centre

A LONG-AWAITED community centre in Dudley is nearing its official opening.

The North Priory Community Centre is being built beside Donkey Pool playing fields, off Priory Road. It was set to open in May but there was a set back due to funding for building work.

Councillor Ken Finch, who represents the Castle and Priory ward, said: "It has been frustrating because it should have been open by now. But the committee are now in the process of dealing with admin' and sponsors and the keys have been given to us."

"We are not there yet but it should be up and running with an official opening within the next few weeks."

Donations of furniture were offered by Dudley College and Dudley Council earlier this year.

# New branch of WI

A NEW branch of the Women's Institute has been formed in Gornal, called the Black Country Wenches WI. It will meet on the second Thursday each month at Zoar Methodist Church, Bank Road, Lower Gornal, at 7pm. Call 07704 729282 or 07760 315346.

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# Hospital is still failing to hit the A&E target

RUSSELLS Hall Hospital is still failing to meet Accident & Emergency waiting time targets – but is not performing as badly as other hospitals in the region.

One in 10 patients were kept waiting longer than four hours to be seen at the Dudley hospital during October, as 90.1 per cent were seen on time.

It means the Dudley Group NHS Trust, which runs the hospital, is still failing to meet the national 95 per cent target that has been set by the Government.

But its A&E performance is better than NHS trusts in Sandwell, Walsall and Staffordshire.

All Black Country NHS trusts are falling short of the Government target in latest figures, which have been released looking at the percentage of people seen within four hours

City While the University Hospitals of North Midlands, which runs County Hospital in Stafford and Royal Stoke in north Staffordshire, was ranked the third worst in the country.

Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust, which runs Sandwell General Hospital and City Hospital, hit 85.4 per cent, down from 87.9 per cent in September. Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust, which runs Walsall Manor Hospital, is 82.8 per cent, up from 81.8.

# 10 burglary and break-in arrests

TEN burglary suspects have been arrested by West Midlands Police as part of a weekend crime crackdown across the region.

The suspects, aged between 15 and 41 years old, have been taken into custody for offences ranging from a school break-in to a house burglary.

Officers arrested two men aged 18 and 26 on suspicion of stealing TVs from a house in Stourbridge Road, Dudley.

A 36-year-old man was also arrested on suspicion of taking meat from Farm Foods, Wednesbury.

Five youths, aged from 15 to 17, were arrested during the early hours of Monday morning following reports of a burglary at Rosslyn School, Hall Green.

# Showaddy show

ROCK and roll stars Showaddywaddy will perform in Brierley Hill next year. They will play their 1970s hits at Brierley Hill Civic Hall on May 5 from 8pm. Tickets £20, see [bhillicivc.co.uk](http://bhillicivc.co.uk).

# Hall is safe in our hands, says councillor



Historic Himley Hall will not be sold

HIMLEY Hall will not be sold off, a boss at owners Dudley Council promises, and he has labelled the 18th century hall as a 'jewel in the crown' of the borough.

The cash-strapped authority recently revealed plans to sell off some of its assets to raise funds but the hall is a listed building and also brings in money as the borough's most prestigious public venue.

The authority said last month that the estate's 'wide range of buildings and green spaces' would be 'looked at'. The sprawling estate on the bor-

ough border with South Staffordshire includes the Great Pool, a nine-hole golf course, cafe and car park all set in 180 acres of 'Capability' Brown landscape and woodland. There are various outbuildings.

Dudley's regeneration boss Councillor Ian Kettle has moved to allay any fears the hall could be sold. Instead the council would looking at how it could make more money from the landmark, former home to the Earls of Dudley, which hosts weddings and conferences. The hall's grounds host the annual fireworks spectacular,

Armed Forces Day, and other events.

Councillor Kettle said: "The new corporate estate strategy is much more than just a cost-cutting exercise. It is true that we will be looking at possible ways of reducing our costs. But the review will also – this is very important when we are talking about Himley Hall – look at ways of maximising the potential of our assets."

"It is already a very popular venue for weddings and conferences. Coupled with its undoubted historical value, that very much makes it a jewel in the crown for this authority."

# Winter weather makes it snow go across borough

**THE heavy snowfall at the weekend brought early festive cheer to thousands of youngsters, especially when they got a day off school on Monday.**

It was less fun for the commuters who had to make perilous homeward journeys on Friday or those who had to dig themselves out for a slip-sliding journey to work on Monday morning.

The winter wonderland meant cancellations and chaos for many, with bus and train services severely restricted, but the consolation was enjoyed by many families going sledding and snowman-making in the Arctic conditions.

Many of the regions attractions remained closed over the weekend and into the start of the week.

Volunteers at Severn Valley Railway slept at the stations overnight to clear platforms and de-ice the rails but were still forced to cancel all Sunday's Santa Steam Specials due to the continuing snowfall. Those booked on services will be contacted.

Dudley Zoo, which closed on Friday, remained shut over the weekend, citing the welfare of their animals and the health and safety of staff and visitors. Refunds and alternative dates are available.

The site may have been closed but it was business as usual for zoo keepers who had to transport supplies across the 40-acre grounds. Some used sledges to help move food around the Castle Hill site to care for the 1,600 animals.

## Jog

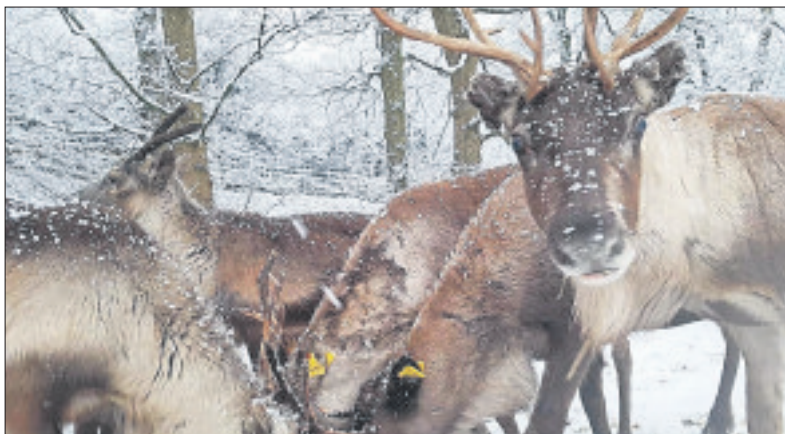
The Black Country Living Museum closed on Sunday and the museum was contacting those who had booked for the Santa Hunt.

The Santa Jog that was due to be held in Mary Stevens Park in aid of the hospice on Sunday had to be called off but has been rescheduled for Sunday.

Wolverhampton Grand were quick to tweet their decision to call off both Sunday matinee and evening performances of Jack and The Beanstalk hours after opening the run on Saturday night.

Veteran comedian Sir Ken Dodd's performance at the Wulfrun Hall was also postponed but the 90-year-old's show has been re-arranged for December 21. Contact the venue for further details.

Families were advised to check individual school websites for opening updates.



Santa's on his way – the reindeer at Dudley Zoo were cared for but the zoo was closed to the public



Snow one around – Stourbridge town centre



Narnia? No, Dudley in the snow last weekend

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Twice the value in town calendar

A TWO-YEAR calendar featuring paintings and photographs of Dudley has gone on sale.

Proceeds from the 2018/2019 calendar will go to the Mayor of Dudley Councillor Dave Tyler's chosen charities – Dudley Mind, Dudley Alzheimer's Society and the Black Country branch of the YMCA.

It has been put together by mayoral ambassador Sue Randle and features paintings from Black Country artist Graham Colbourne and photographs from students at Dudley College.

Call Sue Randle on 07412 531924 or email [suzylimesrdc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:suzylimesrdc@hotmail.co.uk) to order a copy of the £10 calendar.

### Football legend inspires thesis

A DESCENDANT of football icon Duncan Edwards has been awarded a PhD after conducting a seven-year study into her famous relative.

Gayle Rogers did not have to look too far for her subject of her thesis, investigating how Edwards had been commemorated since his death following the 1958 Munich Air Disaster.

Gayle, 49, who like Edwards grew up in Dudley, under took seven years of research which included interviews with fans and family. She received her PhD from the University of Central Lancashire in Preston on December 5.

### Switch apparently switched for Daz

A MOTHER from Dudley was left shocked after ordering a £300 games console for her son on Cyber Monday – only to receive a box of washing powder instead. Paediatric nurse Charlotte Moore, 30, says she ordered the Nintendo Switch for £301.99 as her six-year-old son's Christmas present. When the parcel arrived the mother-of-two thought she better check and found it contained a £4 box of Daz washing powder. It looked as if the parcel had been tampered with then resealed. Amazon said it would be replaced.

### Thieves don't quit during festive season

RESIDENTS across Dudley borough have been urged to be vigilant to stay safe from bogus callers and from burglars over the festive season.

Dudley Council partnership service Living Well, Feeling Safe is highlighting the risks. Police have encouraged people to lock both their front and back doors, even when at home, use a door chain and always ask for identification. Don't leave valuables on show – including presents.

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# COUNTY NEWS

## Willard to receive honorary degree

MICRO-SCULPTOR Willard Wigan will receive an honorary degree from the University of Warwick, it has been announced.

Willard will be made an Honorary Doctor of Letters by the university next year. The micro-artist, from Wolverhampton, crafts the world's smallest works of art and has been recognised in the Guinness Book of World Records. His works include miniature versions of athlete Usain Bolt and cartoon characters Pinocchio and Cinderella. The sculptor, who will receive the degree at a ceremony in January, was awarded an MBE for services to art in 2007.

## Comic comes out to visit exhibit

BRUMMIE comic and rising TV star Joe Lycett has spoken of his pride at a new exhibition opening in his home city looking at the past five decades of sexuality. The ground-breaking 'Coming Out' exhibition marks the 50th anniversary of the partial decriminalisation of male homosexual acts in England and Wales.

Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery will feature works by celebrated artists including Andy Warhol, Francis Bacon and Grayson Perry. Lycett, who has appeared on shows including Live at the Apollo, Never Mind the Buzzcocks and 8 Out of 10 Cats, made a guest appearance at the launch.

## Students join business group

SEVEN students from the Black Country have joined the 2017/2018 cohort of the Lloyds Bank Social Entrepreneurs Programme. The year-long programme offers financial support towards a social business to help solve some of the most pressing issues.

They include Lianne Cargill from Oldbury, Clive Corbett of Kingswinford, Omar Campbell of Walsall, Mandeep Singh, Chloe Dennis-Green, Gurinder Basson, all Wolverhampton and Lorna Phillip of Birmingham.

## Samosa wins Indian food firm gold award

A GREAT Barr-based Indian food firm, co-founded by an Aston University student, has won a gold award for its vegetable samosa.

Sisters Geeta, 30, and Reena Salhan, 24, received the award in the 'food manufactured for food service' category for their business Green Sisters in the FreeFrom Eating Out Awards - who promote excellence in 'free from' food outlets for people with special diets.

# Trolley good effort by former Goodyear staff



**Celebrating a Good-year effort - trolley loads of food bought by former Goodyear workers at Blakemore Wholesale Unit, in Wolverhampton**

FORMER Goodyear workers have been spreading some festive cheer by handing over a massive donation of £2,000 worth of food and toiletries to our Feed A Family This Christmas appeal.

This incredibly generous gift of more than 2,500 items will go towards

helping families and individuals in need across the Black Country.

Trolleys were loaded with everything from tins of vegetables, noodle pots and pasta to bottles of squash, long-life milk and jars of coffee. There was also an array of sweet treats including chocolate selection

boxes for youngsters and vital toiletries including toothbrushes, shampoo and deodorant.

Families with babies were also included with much-needed donations of nappies and wipes among the items donated by the Goodyear workers 5/344 Transport and General Work-

ers Union Benevolent Fund. Bosses at Blakemore Wholesale in Wolverhampton also helped.

It's almost 12 months since production finished at Goodyear but chairman of the Unite branch Cyril Barrett said workers were still very much committed to helping the community.

# Bishop's blessing



Cycling legend Hugh Porter has been backing the appeal



Rug trader Doris Bradbury makes her contribution to the Feed A Family collection point at Anne Franks's pop up charity stall at Cannock market

**THE Bishop of Dudley has spoken of the terrible struggles faced by families who are finding it difficult to put food on the table.**

The Right Rev Graham Usher says he is aware of one heart-breaking example where a father had to ask his daughter to choose between celebrating her birthday or Christmas.

Thankfully, a food bank came to the rescue so that she could have both a birthday gift and be able to enjoy the festive season. The Bishop shared the story as he donated food towards the Express & Star and Chronicle's Feed a Family This Christmas appeal, which is aiming to help hundreds of families



Bishop of Dudley, Graham Usher

and the vulnerable across the Black Country and Staffordshire. And time is running out for donations, with the appeal finishing on Saturday.

He said: "Christmas is for many of us a wonderful time of family gatherings and eating and drinking too

much. It is rightly a time of joy and celebration. Amidst the fairy lights and tinsel that surround us there are families trying to live with difficult choices. Hard working families on low incomes who are struggling to make ends meet. Refugees who are confused having fled their homes. Elderly people who are frequently lonely.

"In recent weeks I've heard of women in a local refuge who, having fled domestic violence, applied for Universal Credit and have no money as they await the result."

The Bishop asked others to join him in supporting the Feed a Family appeal, joining a host of other notable Midlandsers including Wolverhampton cycling legend Hugh Porter, who has also backed the appeal

We are asking for gifts of festive

food, such as mince pies, chocolates and Christmas puddings, as well as basics like canned goods, long-life milk, fruit juice, pasta and rice.

Non-food items such as toiletries, baby supplies, new socks and small presents are also welcome during the appeal.

Meanwhile, generous members of the public have donated to Cannock market, at trader Anne Franks's pop-up stall.

Anne sells a variety of items each week for a different charity and has used this month to support the Feed A Family campaign. Customers and fellow traders have also given cat and dog food to ensure pets don't go without either. Anne said: "Everyone has been very kind."



### THE DROP-OFF POINTS:

Express & Star Wolverhampton, 51-53 Queen Street, WV1 1ES; Express & Star Cannock/Walsall office, Queen Square, Cannock WS11 1EA; Oldbury office, Black Country House, Rounds Green Road, Oldbury, B69 2DG.

### DONATIONS CAN ALSO BE DROPPED OFF AT:

Waitrose Wolverhampton, Penn Road, WV2 4NJ; The Midlands Co-operative Food Store Cannock, 28-32 Wood Lane/Bakers Way, Cannock WV8 1DB. Also at the Saddlers Centre in Walsall. Donations dropped off at those will go to The Well.

# Junction 10 works will mean delays for 2 years

DRIVERS will face nearly two years of delays during the major revamp of the M6 junction 10, council chiefs have revealed.

The £65 million project to reduce congestion, which will see the two main bridges replaced and surrounding roads widened to increase capacity, could start as early as next winter.

But bosses have now revealed it will take around 98 weeks from start to finish, causing chaos for drivers using the route near Walsall and Wolverhampton. It will also mean more misery for Midlands motorway commuters, who currently face delays on the M5 close to the link with the M6.

Walsall Council's cabinet met on Wednesday to authorise officers to contact landowners about plots which will need to be acquired to expand the junction.

The council needs to take on two acres of land permanently and a further 2.5 acres temporarily.

But they will also need to create a temporary construction compound which will either be based at John Hill & Sons scrapyard off the Wolverhampton Road, or the industrial estate of Bloxwich Lane.

Councillor Angela Underhill, who represents Bentley and Darlaston North which contains the junction, hoped the disruption would be worth it in the long-term.

She said: "I am dreading the next couple of years but at least I know it is going to end."

## New secondary school on hold

A NEW secondary school which will open in Blakenall has been pushed back by 12 months.

The Windsor Academy Trust, which will run the 1,150 free school, has now confirmed it will be called Swift Academy whilst stating that it will welcome its first students in September 2019 and not September next year as was originally hoped.

A consultation launched in November on the project and will run until January 22.

A site is yet to be agreed and the trust confirmed that is why the opening has been delayed.

Keith Sorrell, the chief executive officer of the trust, said: "We believe - and local parents tell us - that there is a clear need for more secondary provision in the Blakenall area of Walsall.

"It is hugely encouraging to see the number of really positive responses to our consultation."

Visit [swiftacademy.org.uk](http://swiftacademy.org.uk) for more information on Swift Academy.

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# Merry Hill owner intu is bought in £3.4bn deal

SHOPPING centres group Hammerson is to take over rival intu, owner of the Merry Hill shops complex at Brierley Hill, in a £3.4 billion deal that will create Britain's biggest property company.

The boards of Hammerson, which already owns The Bullring and Grand Central in Birmingham, and intu, which also owns Lakeside in Essex and Manchester's Trafford Centre, have agreed the offer by Hammerson to buy all intu shares.

Hammerson is also leading development of a new shopping complex on a 12-acre former foundry site on Bromford Road in Oldbury.

The deal will create a £21bn shopping centres giant.

The offer represents a value of approximately 253.9p per intu share, equivalent to £3.4bn.

The combined group, which will be called Hammerson, will be led by Hammerson boss David Atkins and chaired by David Tyler. John Whittaker, deputy chairman of intu, will become deputy chairman of the enlarged group and John Strachan, chairman of intu, will join the board as senior independent director.

The group overall will have six directors nominated by Hammerson and four directors nominated by Intu. Hammerson will continue to use the intu consumer brand within its shopping centre portfolio.

# Salmon in Stour project website

A WEBSITE has been set up to support the Salmon in the Stour project.

The four-year project aims to improve the River Stour and all its tributaries for both wildlife and people.

The project is being co-ordinated by the Severn Rivers Trust, Environment Agency, Worcestershire Wildlife Trust and the Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country.

A picture of what needs to be done is currently being built up. Some of the targets include removing barriers to fish migration, re-naturalising artificial banks, tackling the spread of invasive species and identifying and resolving sources of pollution.

Go to the [severnriverstrust.com/projects/salmon-in-the-stour](http://severnriverstrust.com/projects/salmon-in-the-stour) website for further details.

# Christmas past

A FESTIVE exhibition looking at Christmases past is being held at Dudley Archives and Local History Centre, Tipton Road, until the end of December. It features photographs and memorabilia. Free entry.

# Assurance over turnover of health chiefs



Chief executive Diane Wake

FOUR out of five senior health bosses at Russells Hall Hospital have left their posts this year with the fifth leaving this month.

The turnover of staff at the top of Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, which runs the hospital, resulted in questions being raised by Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group.

Both the hospital and CCG insisted the departures would not impact on patients and a new team was in place after the CCG, which oversees health care in the borough, demanded assurances from the trust.

A number of high ranking NHS staff left after new chief executive Diane Wake took over the running of Russells Hall from Paula Clark in April.

Interim medical director Julian Hobbs replaced Paul Harrison in October. Mr Harrison is also no longer deputy chief executive. Michael Woods was appointed interim chief operating officer, replacing Paul Bytheway, who left in September. Mr Woods will be replaced by Karen Kelly, who will take the permanent role in January.

Siobhan Jordan took over as chief nurse from Dawn Wardell in March, getting the job permanently in October. The current director of finance, Paul Taylor, leaves at the end of this month. Chris Walker, current deputy director finance, will take over on an interim basis.

Ms Wake said it had been a 'period of change' but she added: "We are fortunate that all our new board members have benefitted from comprehensive hand-overs with their predecessors or long-standing deputies, who have significant organisational and local knowledge."

"Our priority has continued to be quality patient care and safety."

# Power supply problems hit major foundry firm

A MAJOR foundry business may be forced to move after being told it should fork out £1.4 million to pay for an improved electricity supply.

Thomas Dudley and other companies in Dudley borough have experienced power supply problems, which have led the Black Country Chamber of Commerce to campaign for improved infrastructure.

Chamber chief executive Corin Crane said that energy supply was becoming a big issue for local businesses and would form part of its Making the Future campaign.

He explained that many firms had reported problems with power outages, reliability and a reluctance from energy companies to invest in improving infrastructure.

"We will be approaching the Government directly about the problems and the price difference being faced by our businesses and their European competitors," he said.

Martin Dudley, chairman and chief executive of the castings firm, said: "The high cost of power in the UK against Europe is a big problem. A lot of countries have subsidised power, which is a disadvantage to us."

## Constraint

He said his company had invested more than £10m to upgrade its site and foundry, including £3m on its new offices at the Birmingham New Road site.

He added: "We are now finding a constraint on the amount of product that we can produce because we can't get enough power to the site."

"Our network provider is telling us we are at full capacity and we have to spend £1.4m to upgrade infrastructure in the local area."

"We don't think we should be both buying electricity and paying for infrastructure to be improved as well."

Western Power Distribution (WPD) corporate communications officer Michael Clarke said the new furnace meant that Thomas Dudley exceeded their agreed supply capacity.

He added that WPD were investing £133,000 to replace cable in the local area to improve the reliability of electricity supply.

# Golf day tees up cash for charities



Beacon's Donna Gordon with the society's Lee Judson and, right, Simon Cater, of Compton Hospice

AN annual charity golf day raised £3,080 for worthwhile causes. The key date in the Tipton and Coseley Building Society's fundraising calendar was well supported with 15 teams competing.

The Tipton's Charitable Foundation also contributed £2,500 to the fundraising coffers, meaning

Beacon Centre in Sedgley and Compton Hospice in Tettenhall each received £2,790.

Donna Gordon, partnership development manager at Beacon Centre, said: "We are incredibly grateful to Tipton and Coseley Building Society for raising this money for Beacon."

Simon Cater, corporate fundraiser at Compton Hospice, added: "This wonderful donation will enable us to provide 24 visits from a hospice at-home nurse to a patient in their own home."

Lee Judson, from the society, said: "It's always a pleasure to donate cash to these two charities."

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## Bert's tribute team climb again

A BEN Nevis climb in memory of a peace campaigner from Dudley is being held again in August next year.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin and Mayor of Dudley Councillor Dave Tyler will be among those climbing Britain's highest peak in honour of Bert Bissell. He climbed Ben Nevis 107 times and constructed a peace cairn at the summit in 1945.

A group has made an annual trip to the Scottish mountain in his memory since 2014, raising thousands of pounds for borough charities. Next year will mark the 20th anniversary of Mr Bissell's death. Contact steve waltho@hotmail.co.uk for details.

## Dress by order of the Peaky Blinders

THERE will be a prize for the best Peaky Blinders outfit at a Dudley hotel's festive event on Saturday.

The Station Hotel on Castle Hill is hosting a Peaky Blinders-era fancy dress night. Tickets are £2 in advance from the hotel reception. The evening will also feature traditional Black Country food and pub games.

Series four of the Birmingham set 1920s gangster drama is currently being screened by the BBC on Wednesdays, after scenes were filmed a short distance away from the hotel at the Black Country Living Museum.

## Some parents can get free childcare

PARENTS are being urged to take up the Time for Twos offer in Dudley borough, which gives up to 15 hours free childcare for two-year-olds.

Parents who receive certain benefits, have an income of less than £16,190 per year, or have a child with a disability or special educational needs may be eligible for the free 15 hours during term time weeks.

The offer of up to 15 hours free childcare each week can be used at a local private nursery, pre-school or with a childminder. Call (01384) 814291 for details.

## Santa will be special guest at charity event

A CHRISTMAS charity event in aid of the homeless is taking place in Stourbridge on Saturday.

Leslie's Care Packages will hold the event in St Thomas' Church Hall, Market Street, from 11am to 3pm, including a free Santa's grotto. Those visiting can also expect stalls selling cakes, books, plus a raffle, refreshments and live music. Visitors can also hang a paper bauble in memory of a loved one on the Christmas tree.

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## IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



# Food critic needs to Shed his prejudices

YEARS ago, a long-haired food critic named Jay Rayner gave his verdict on the culinary tastes of Black Country folk. His summary is best described as withering.

He said there was not a single good place to eat in the Black Country "because the local population doesn't want good food." A bit harsh, I thought, but at the time put it down to regional differences in taste. With the proviso, of course, that cosmopolitan liberal London tastes are superior to those of the rest of the country.

What Mr Rayner did not really express, though, was what his precise taste was. He told us he didn't like cow pie from a pub in Netherton, which he said was "not quite the a\*\*\*hole of the world, but bloody close". But he didn't say what type of food he did like. Well he has now.

Recently he took to Twitter to share his thoughts on an achingly trendy new restaurant in south London called The Shed. He opined: "At last: a restaurant that recognises food is all about mood. Of all the shed-based experiences out there this one sounds like the best."

He added he was very keen to try out a dish called "Contemplation", which looked delightful in the soft-focus pictures on the restaurant's website.

The Shed was, in fact, a wind-up. It was created by a chap called Oobah Butler to highlight the absurdity of the people who rave about supposedly cutting-edge food, and the perils of reading too much into online reviews. "Contemplation", like his other dishes "Empathetic" and "Comfort" were mocked up using such delightful ingredients as shaving foam, household paint, plus a couple of toilet blocks to give it that special je ne sais quoi.

For what it's worth, I think Mr Rayner is wrong. People in the Black Country appreciate good food. It's just that it would take more than a few pretentious words about "mood" to persuade us to eat the contents of the bathroom stool.

That said, if anyone fancies a whip-round to help Mr Rayner achieve his dream of tasting Contemplation, I'd be delighted to chip in.

□□□

IT'S here. It's official. You can always tell when the Christmas celebrations have started in earnest when you get the first reports of the Christmas grottos that don't quite live up the make-believe expectations.

One of the first off the block was the one at Gracechurch Shopping Centre in Sutton Coldfield, where Father Christmas failed to show up because he had been caught in snow. Elf 'n' safety, one presumes.

## Yobs now believe that the courts can't harm them



Pamela Stephenson – spoke frankly about her friendship with the royals



Prince Harry – it is said he knew he should wed somebody from showbiz



Christine Keeler – virtually impossible for parents to protect today's children

# CCTV holds no fear for all these thugs

THE most chilling CCTV footage of the week shows two thugs on a Tube train in London. They attacked a young man, half-strangled him in a headlock, took his mobile phone and threatened to stab him until he "apologised" for being gay. What made this incident so shocking was not the level of violence, nor even the hatred behind the attack. It was that these thugs must have known their faces would be caught on CCTV, and simply didn't give a damn. Were they out of their skulls on drugs, or made mad by religious fervour? Perhaps it's more likely that they are part of that vast feral army of youths who, having been caught and cautioned repeatedly by the police, have come to believe the law cannot harm them. CCTV was supposed to be a deterrent. It is not. The courts are supposed to be a deterrent. They are not. And as you look into the dead-eyed faces of those two yobs on the Tube, you can only pray your paths do not cross with theirs, for the cameras on the wall will not save you and the judges will not give you justice.

THE shop doorways seem fuller than ever with homeless sleepers. This is an existence which depends entirely on the generosity of people with spare cash. But the advent of contactless debit cards coupled with the plans to strip out thousands of high-street cash machines, as announced last week, means we may soon become a cashless society. And what then? "Any spare change, mate?" "No change at all, pal."

I WAS in a shop queue behind a woman who was buying 15 chocolate oranges. "It's the grandchildren," she gushed. "They all want an orange in their stockings." I guess it would be unfestive to point out that, despite the name,

## THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



a great fatty globe of milk chocolate laced with orange essence is not actually an orange. By way of comparison, an orange contains 87 calories, a chocolate orange about 800.

WE live in an age of entrepreneurs, chancers and wide boys. East of England Co-op has just started selling rice, crisps, pasta and other "dry goods" that have passed their best-before date for just 10p. Are they on eBay at 50p yet?

AND off to our first Xmas meal of the season, one of those events where you have to specify the menu in advance. Seriously, how many of us know, half way through November, whether, on a Sunday in early December, we might fancy chicken pate or prawns? One easy decision was to eliminate broccoli and Stilton soup from the equation. Broccoli and Stilton, for gawd's sake. Doesn't the very thought of it make you heave?

A FRIEND recalls another Stilton experiment that didn't quite work. On the menu in a country pub some years ago, mackerel with Stilton sauce looked strangely tempting. Turned out to be a curious blend of oily fish with that Stilton hint of damp, unwashed sports kit left in the locker all year. Well all I can say to that is Bon appetit.

IF the gossips are to be believed, Prince Harry said he knew he should wed somebody from showbiz just days before he met Meghan

Markle. Not because he wanted to meet someone glamorous but because celebrities and royals understand the pleasures and perils of fame and how to deal with them. This rang a bell. Ages ago, I interviewed Pamela Stephenson and she spoke very frankly about her and her husband Billy Connolly's friendship with the royals, notably Prince Charles. There was, she said, a common bond between the Windsors and the Connollys based simply on being famous and coping with the fans. And now she's Lady Connolly.

OUR changing language. Some long-term cannabis users in the States have reported unexplained episodes of screaming and vomiting. The condition has been named "scromiting."

CHRISTINE Keeler has died, aged 75. In the same week a major police operation against online sex stalkers revealed how it is virtually impossible for parents to protect today's children from the depravity of adults. Back in the 1960s, controlling your kids' access to the worldwide media was much simpler. I remember my father getting up early to hide the Daily Express, thus preventing us kids from reading a single juicy word about the Profumo Affair.

THE Great Puffin Conspiracy continues, this time on Blue Planet II (BBC1). It is rife among naturalists and its mantra is: "I can make my puffins look bigger than yours." Using zoom lenses, full-frame images and a lack of any means of comparison, puffins appear to be as big as turkeys. In real life as one wildlife tourism website warns its customers: "They are always smaller than people expect."

## TALKING POINT



# Why make such a meal over Christmas?

SCROOGE. Killjoy. Grinch. Party-pooper. These are just some of the comments I've had to endure over the years . . . and all because I'm not a fan of Christmas.

It seems just because I can't get carried away with the idea of buying overpriced presents for people who don't really want them, and don't find it easy to enter into the party spirit I'm a mean, curmudgeonly misery who doesn't want anyone to enjoy the festive season.

And yet nothing could be further from the truth. I love to see people looking forward to a fortnight of over-indulgence and slothfulness in the name of merriment. It's just that I don't really get why we all have to be involved.

Just this month, two things highlighted this divide in my eyes. The first was the annual discussion over when and where to have the office "do" and who to invite. Personally, I don't enjoy eating out, except when absolutely necessary. I get exasperated with the rigmarole of perusing the menu, waiting to order, and finally trying to attract someone's attention to get the bill. So that was that. I gave it a miss.

The second reminder was when one of my favourite radio programmes was cut by 15 minutes so the station could promote its Christmas charity appeal. I've got nothing against charity – I regularly send a large donation to my chosen good cause – but again I had the feeling that I was being browbeaten into making a gesture I'm not that wild about.

It set me thinking about a news article in which the idea of loneliness at Christmas was questioned. The report pointed out many people feel more lonely in the summer. It seems with all the activities going on outdoors, and relatives and friends away on holiday, a large proportion of the population living alone might prefer Christmas time, no matter how little attention they receive around now.

So, where does that leave us? My father used to say once the presents had been opened, and the turkey dinner polished off, that was Christmas over and done with for another year. In my view, he was right, especially in view of all the fuss and palaver in the "run-up to the big day" as the advertising industry likes to put it.

To sum up, I'll leave you with one of my favourite observations on Christmas which springs to mind every year. It came from comedy actress Goldie Hawn, who said "Why don't they move Christmas to July when the shops aren't so busy?"

It always make me smile, even though it might provoke a debate for another day. In the meantime, goodwill to you all.

STEVE PARLETT

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6th - Monday 9th April 2018 4 Days	\$149
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Monday 9th - Friday 13th April 2018 5 Days	\$269
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Monday 16th - Friday 20th April 2018 5 Days	\$219



# Boundary changes would rip Dudley apart

HAVING failed to put Halesowen into a constituency with part of Birmingham, the Boundary Commission has now decided to tear apart Dudley leaving only part of the old borough in a constituency bearing its name, and dumping the other parts into constituencies outside the Dudley borough.

Half the town centre and Oakham would be ripped from their historic roots and transplanted into a constituency based around Smethwick. The other half, mostly Netherton, would be absorbed into Halesowen and Rowley Regis constituency.

Woodsetton and half of Old Park, just two miles from the town centre, together with Sedgley and Upper Gornal, would be separated into a constituency with Bilston and Coseley. This piece of mischief would create a constituency, comprising a significant part of Dudley borough, called Wolverhampton South & Coseley.

This would lead to the farcical situation of MPs, representing north and central Dudley, gathering in counting halls in Sandwell and Wolverhampton to hear their election results.

This is just plain wrong.

The only justification for this is to reduce the number of MPs and create similar sized constituencies – a principle selectively ignored in other parts of the country where it would upset the locals. But it's okay to break up the historic communities that make up Dudley, and give them to MPs who will struggle to understand and represent the local interests of its constituents?

Let's tell those fools at the Boundary Commission to back off, go back to the drawing board, and start again.

**A A CROMPTON**  
Dudley

## Steps view ruined by a wiggler

MYSELF, my daughter and granddaughter went along to the Arena Birmingham to see the group Steps perform.

Steps gave the performance of their lives. We thoroughly enjoyed it and the supporting act, Vengaboys, were really good also.

The only thing that spoilt it for me was a very selfish young lady sat directly in front of me.

When the music got to her she decided to stand up, wiggling her hips to the music and completely blocking my view of the group. After a while I politely asked her to sit. She wasn't very happy but eventually did so. However, this was repeated several times.

I had paid good money to see the show and wanted to be able to see what was going on. If you want to stand and dance around why not book tickets in the standing area?

**MRS JEAN GREENHALL**  
Kingswinford

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### POST

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Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

### EMAIL

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story, write to The Editor, Chronicles, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

## If they can walk that far why the badge?

IN response to the two letters regarding parking opposite Russells Hall Hospital, I would like to add that if someone with a blue badge can walk the distance to the hospital and then round the hospital they probably aren't entitled to a blue badge anyway!

If an able-bodied driver has dropped them off then surely they should have to park in a normal parking space and not in a disabled parking place.

The same goes for shopping centres and supermarkets.

**BARBARA BODDISON**  
Kingswinford

## A second referendum is required

BREXIT negotiations continue to reveal facts that should have been revealed during the referendum.

It is becoming obvious that the 'Leave' campaign and the Government had either not thought through the consequences, or deliberately concealed the truth.

Throughout the negotiations the problem of the Irish border has been sidelined, as if it were a secondary item. On the contrary, it is fundamental.

It is now becoming likely that the Irish border may not be a physical border but a border on a map. If that should happen, our borders will be no more secure, possibly more vulnerable. That is not what the majority voted for. The EU will almost certainly support the Irish Republic on this issue. Should this be the case, then the referendum is fatally flawed and we should be allowed a second referendum.

**MICHAEL CLIFF**  
Wall Heath

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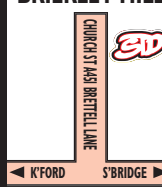
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Phil Timma and Natalie Baggott tuck into a burger at the BBQ



There was musical entertainment too



Ready to try the street food on offer in Stourbridge



Rock Choir members Pam Simpson and Mary Whitehouse in festive mood



Louisa Dovey with her illuminated bottles



Glasses of fzz for Jess Lowe, Becky Shaw and Michaela Loperis

# Food fair is festive success

**FAMILIES** braved the wintry conditions to enjoy a festival of street food and music in Stourbridge.

There was plenty of hot food to warm the cockles of those who turned out for the 'Street Food Affair' on Saturday, not to mention a drop of

mulled wine and sloe gin. More than 1,500 people turned out next to the canal at the Bonded Warehouse for the event which was organised by Sarah New.

She set up the venture last year and has not looked back with the food festival proving popular with Black Country visitors.

And rather than put people off, the snow helped turn the festival into a 'winter wonderland' and saw it take a Christmas market feel. Buskers were also on hand to keep spirits high.

Mother-of-two Sarah, aged 54, from Wordsley, said he was delighted with how the event went.

"It was fantastic. It turned into a winter wonderland," she said. "We must have had 1,800 people which, in the conditions, is brilliant."

"It was a huge success. A few stallholders weren't able to attend because they just couldn't get here but we had more than enough traders." Sarah admits the turnout at her

events had defied her expectations and that she is excited for the future with more festivals planned for next year.

She said: "It is about bringing the community together and supporting local talent. We have got so much talent in Stourbridge and the Black Country."

## Faith leaders are opposing new boundary

FAITH leaders in Dudley are united in calling for a stop to boundary proposals that would split the town centre. St Thomas ward would be reassigned to a new Sandwell constituency, under Boundary Commissions proposals. This means a ward including Kates Hill, Buffery, Sledmere, Blowers Green and Oakham would not longer be represented by a Dudley MP. It would instead be part of a Sandwell constituency stretching from Dudley to Edgbaston. It would also see Dudley's town centre church of St Thomas's in a different constituency from the ward that has its name.

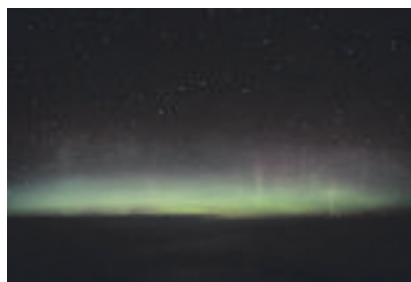
Christian, Muslim and Sikh faith leaders have objected. Rev Robert Barlow, Rector of Dudley, said: "The church has been changing its structures to make cooperation across the borough much easier, so these proposals couldn't come at the worst possible time." Palvinder Bains from The Guru Nanak Singh Sabha Gurdwara said: "We are appalled that these proposals clearly do not take in to consideration the needs of residents." Mr Mohammed Aurangzeb, chairman of Dudley Central Mosque, said: "I am really concerned that members of our community could have to travel all the way to the edge of Birmingham to see their 'local' MP."

## Lots to laugh about as comedians visit

THERE'S lots to laugh about in Wolverhampton with top comedy shows including controversial Russell Brand bring his Re:Birth show to the Civic Hall on Wednesday (December 20). Roy 'Chubby' Brown brings his politically incorrect gags to the Civic on December 21, then the venue hosts I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here's Joel Dommett on December 29, a show postponed from November. The Laugh Out Loud Comedy Club night is at Wolverhampton Art Gallery this Saturday with Scottish comedian Raymond Mearns.

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Family are worried over missing man



Simon Smith, aged 50, from Brierley Hill, has been missing from his home since December 3

CONCERN is growing for the safety of a man who has not been seen for more than week.

Simon Smith, aged 50, from Brierley Hill was last seen on December 3.

Police said he had spent the day visiting family in the area but never returned home.

He has not made contact with family and friends since that day and they are said to be extremely worried about his safety.

Simon is described as white, 5ft 8ins tall, slim, with short curly brown hair. The last time he was seen, he was wearing blue jeans, a red jumper, black jacket, a black and green beanie hat and black trainers.

West Midlands Police have urged anyone who believes they may have seen him to call them on the non-emergency 101 number. Information can also be left with the Missing People charity on by calling 116 000.

# President of church has resigned in faith row

A SPIRITUALIST church president has stepped down after she was suspended over a row centred on a medium brought to the church.

Laraine Killarney was suspended from Stourbridge Spiritualist Church last month.

Spiritualists' National Union took the action following a complaint over medium Paul Brereton, who was allegedly invited to speak at a church meeting without being a member.

Union minister David Bruton said there was also complaints over the running of the church.

Ms Killarney had appealed against the decision, but had since resigned, according to Mr Bruton.

She said: I vehemently deny asking Paul Brereton to come to the church. We have an excellent committee but there are four or five on it who are causing trouble. What is going on is completely against our faith.

"I am withdrawing from the church but not from my faith."

Kath Garrad has been appointed as acting presi-

By Alex Ross

dent of the church, which is based in Union Street.

Mr Bruton said: "The suspension came in following a complaint made.

"It was part of the procedure to suspend the individual as the investigation into the complaints takes place.

"One of the complaints about allowing someone to speak at the church AGM who was not a member. It was in relation to the fact that person had been declined to be a working medium at the church. That person was Paul Brereton."

The church holds services every Sunday, and in the week. Congregations can be as large as 200 and the church is one of the largest in the union.

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# Screen and stage roles for Fizzog recruit Esther

AN ACTRESS from Stourbridge is proving to be in demand on both stage and screen.

Esther Stanford will be seen starring as Camilla Johnson, the girlfriend of security guard Barry Biglow, in daytime TV drama series Doctors.

At the same time she will be performing with Black Country comedy group The Fizzogs in their latest show - The Wicked Wizard of Fizzog - at the Netherton Arts Centre from tomorrow (Friday) to Sunday.

Esther is no stranger to performing having developed an impressive portfolio over 20 years as an actress.

"I'm very lucky that as an actress I get to perform a variety of roles from drama to comedy to Fizzog madness," she said.

"In Doctors I play Camilla Johnson, Barry Biglow's annoying girlfriend. I think you hear me before you see me, bossing him round via an answerphone," said Esther.

## Tour

She is also looking forward to joining The Fizzogs on stage.

"This is my third Christmas tour with The Fizzogs playing the comedy character Eunice Clagg. I thoroughly enjoy working with the Fizzog girls. They are all genuinely lovely and very

talented funny women."

Esther trained at the ITV Workshop where her fellow students included Birmingham's Oscar-nominated The Theory Of Everything star Felicity Jones and TV presenter Alison Hammond, who is currently in panto in Malvern and switched on Dudley's Christmas lights.

Esther's other television appear-



Esther as her Fizzogs character Eunice Clagg will join the touring show



The Fizzogs as their most famous characters the Dancing Grannies

ances include previous episodes of Doctors, as well as EastEnders, Heartbeat, Peak Practice and Hetty Wainthropp Investigates.

She founded and has run the Stourbridge-based Dramaworkshop for the last seven years and has helped nurture the careers of many budding actors.

Two of the current Fizzog cast -

Rebecca Fuller and Gregory Pipe - trained with her.

After its opening three consecutive nights at Netherton, the Fizzogs' show will resume in the New Year at the Crescent Theatre in Birmingham, visiting Telford, Bridgnorth, Bromsgrove, Walsall and Kidderminster venues. See [www.thefizzogs.com/get-tickets-to-see-the-fizzogs](http://www.thefizzogs.com/get-tickets-to-see-the-fizzogs)

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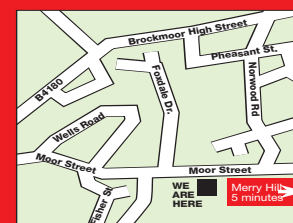
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# Directors are in court over waste mountain

A COMPANY director has admitted offences relating to a mountain of waste at a Dudley industrial estate.

Brian McIntosh, aged 27, of Adams Hill, Bartley Green, Birmingham, a director at Mak Waste Ltd, pleaded guilty at Wolverhampton Magistrates' Court to knowingly causing the contravention of an environmental permit. It relates to a yard once operated by Rowanoak Waste in Shaw Road.

He appeared with Edward Boulton, 42, of Larkspur, Tamworth, also a director at Mak Waste, and Randle Hawkins, 58, of Quarry Bow, Upper Gornal, and Kevin Allan, 58, of Roundway Down, Perton, both directors at Rowanoak.

Boulton denies failing to comply with an environmental permit. Hawkins and Allan had yet to enter pleas. Boulton, Hawkins and Allan are due to appear at Wolverhampton Crown Court on January 4.

## MP Williamson says 'kill British jihadists'

BRITISH jihadists who fight for ISIS should be killed to make sure they never come back to the UK and pose a threat, South Staffordshire MP Gavin Williamson said.

The Kinver MP, who is the new Defence Secretary, has vowed to eliminate those intent on bringing 'destruction, death and bloodshed' to Britain.

He said: "My view is a dead terrorist can't cause any harm to Britain."

The MP said the armed forces were working 'right across the globe' to ensure jihadists are never able to come back to the UK.

But former director of public prosecutions, Lord Macdonald, said: "It simply will not be lawful in all circumstances to kill jihadists, as the Secretary of State seems to be suggesting. We can't simply say that everyone who has gone to Iraq will now be hunted down and killed. That's a juvenile response. It's not a serious, grown-up policy response for a senior British Government minister."



Rescued dogs at the shelter in Romania



Stuart says hello to the canines they're helping



Stuart Sowden, left, and Paul Morris



At work on the kennels to make them winter-proof



The open kennels at the shelter in Bacau

# Duo work to protect dogs

**TWO generous Black Country businessmen have made a return journey to Romania to step in over the suffering of street dogs.**

Paul Morris and Stuart Sowden were so moved by the plight of the abandoned and abused dogs dumped on the streets that they offered to carry out vital work at a rescue shelter in Bacau.

Paul who runs Halesowen firm P&R Morson and colleague Stuart have been carrying out repairs at the

shelter including a new roof on the kennels. Despite having just flown back they are now planning another trip when they will look at the electric at the cash-strapped dogs home.

They stepped in having heard about West Midlands-based Sadie's Stray Dog Rescue which has a shelter in Bacau working to rescue abandoned, abused and injured dogs that have been dumped on the streets. Once well enough, the team in the UK helps to find them new homes.

Friend Katie Hughes, from Hagley, adopted a rescue puppy called Nelly from the organisation and decided

she wanted to find out more about where her pet had come from so went to Bacau with pal Anna Hughes, from Stourbridge. They posted updates on social media which were seen by dog lovers Paul and Stuart.

Paul, who heads the mechanical and electrical contractors, said they knew then that they wanted to get involved and use their skills to help improve the shelter.

"It felt like the least we could do and we were soon hopping on a plane to Bacau ourselves," he added.

They first visited in October and inspected the shelter, determini

what best could be achieved in a week and ordered materials.

One of the biggest challenges was the winter weather in Romania which is harsh, reaching -25 in winter, and the kennels are all outside.

Paul and Stuart then returned recently and replaced the roof on around 20 dog pens - 60 metres in length.

ON his return, Paul said: "We do intend on visiting again to continue with the work. This will be when the weather has turned, around Easter time. We intend to continue with the roofing.

"We will look at installing a dedicated water supply and stand pipes along the full length of the shelter."

Before flying out, Paul had said: "This project is definitely going to be a challenge for us and very emotionally draining I'm sure, but we couldn't sit back and do nothing."

His wife Claudia has also been organising a fundraising appeal to buy new kennels.

For more information and to find out how you can get involved visit: [www.sadiesstraydogrescue.com](http://www.sadiesstraydogrescue.com) or join the Sadie's Stray Dog Rescue group on Facebook.

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# Deck the halls with vintage decorations

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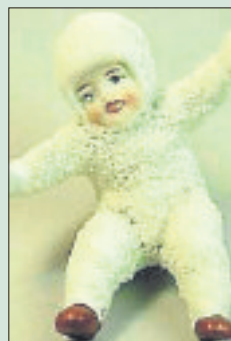
WITH the festive season almost upon us many people will be busy decorating their homes – and so it's timely to remind you all that a number of vintage items make great decorations!

Candles of course play a vital role in creating that seasonal atmosphere and they can be housed in anything from silver candlesticks to pretty china cups.

Red and green candles are the obvious choice for the more formal holders and scented tea-lights might be placed in cups decorated with holly, berries and ivy.

China bowls can be used for potpourri, pine cones and fruit and actually look quite good heaped with brightly-coloured baubles.

Use vintage urns and planters for seasonal plants like poinsettia (although remember to keep these well away from cats as they are poisonous to them!) and



large vases for displays of greenery such as holly and ivy.

If you can find some, put Victorian or Edwardian Christmas cards on display with your modern ones and why not add some vintage toys, such as small dolls and teddies, to your present collection around the tree?

If you're lucky you can find some antique tree ornaments in good condition, the older ones are more difficult to track down but it's possible to find later ones still boxed and pristine (these kind of decorations tend to be well looked after and stored in their original boxes).

Again if you are fortunate you might also be able to find a 'snow baby'; these charming decorations date back to Victorian times and are delightful little model figures.

If you have the room and have one to hand (or can buy one) pile up your presents on a vintage sleigh – if you're lucky it may serve a dual purpose if we have a white Christmas this year!

• The Old Mill Antiques Centre, in Mill Street, Low Town, Bridgnorth is open seven days a week from 10am until 5pm. This year, for the first time ever, we are opening for late-night festive shopping until 8pm every Wednesday until Christmas and Charlie's Tea Rooms will be open at the same time. There is free parking for customers.

# Delight in creativity that simple things can bring



Coloured pencils – how many

I'VE just watched an advert on the television for a Parker pen. In the 1970s and 1980s these were the ultimate gift for achievements, good exam results, completing your degree or a new job.

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Thirty plus years on and we rarely need a pen or pencil, the technology we carry acts as a notebook, journal or diary, immediate words written, saved and able to be sent at the touch of a button.

I love the mechanics of today's documentation but would miss the delight of pen and paper. My son would struggle to find a pencil in his house, it is not a necessary implement for today's society.

Our children do their homework on a laptop and the teacher works from an interactive whiteboard in the classroom. No longer will a secret handwritten note be passed around behind the teachers back, a text message will

## STYLE FOCUS

with Janet Timmis



appear on the recipient's phone instead.

I personally make lists, keep notebooks, write stories and draw and love to look back on the scribbles and words that remind me of specifics and create visual images.

I get amazing delight from purchasing new sketchpads, diaries and journals and complete excitement when I write in them for the very first time.

## Brain

I run a drawing group every week in Market Drayton and am thrilled by the ability of the members with only a pencil and sketchbook. A sense of achievement from the final picture and great fun too.

It helps with articulation and creativity and exercises different parts of the brain.

There are some fabulous products around this year which make wonderful Christmas

presents for anyone and everyone. Make up a package of brightly coloured sketch pads, diaries and project books with a colour theme or design from Wilco or B&M, add some shiny pencils, pens and character rubbers.

WH Smith has beautiful notebooks to suit any personality. You can buy list pads with rip off pages, journals with spaces for photos and keepsakes. The Works sell value art and paper products to keep any age happy.

Someone who loves to write would value a delightful boxed fountain pen and bottle of ink or a pen and pencil combination encased in wood or glass, online sellers such as Amazon and ebay have exciting offers and the gift company 'not on the high street' offer personalised and unusual handwriting gifts.

I embrace the new technology, the incredible changes that improve our lives, the fountain pen has been replaced by the Sharpie and brushes and canvas by a tablet screen but there is delight in the creativity of what the simple things can bring us.

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A glamorous setting featuring top picks from Debenhams, including Jasper Conran Round Decanter, £36; Silver Stag Christmas Candelabra, currently reduced to £24.50 from £35; Gold Metallic Napkins, currently reduced to £9.80 from £14 for set of four; Gold Beaded Napkin Rings, currently reduced to £11.20 from £16 for set of four; Canvas Home White Metallic Glazed Dauville Dinner Plates, £30 each, and also matching Bowls £15 each (all from Debenhams).

# How to lay on the festive style with a table setting



Gold and animal print make for a funky table setting: Leopard Print Dinner Set, currently reduced from £25 to £20; Glitter Stag Ornament, £5, George Home at Asda

THE festive season is almost upon us, which means it's time to step up to the table – and transform it into a stunning setting for the most important meal of the year.

Choose from a colour scheme of silver, gold or classic red and white (maybe with a dash of Highland tartan) for a Christmas table that will attract just as many compliments as the food.

We've already scouted out the best buys on the high street; all you need to do is choose your favourites, and then pop on some carols and set the scene...

## Set a silver shimmer

"Forget any minimalist tendencies and go all out with the glamour and sparkle this Christmas. Gold or silver are festive favourites, but this year, also consider introducing dark, moody tones," says Clare Harris, managing director at Talking Tables (talkingtables.co.uk). "A grey or even black tablecloth creates a dramatic backdrop, and shows off your table decorations more effectively than white. If you're going for a single colour, use a mix of textures and finishes."

"A collection of beautiful mercury glass

By Gabrielle Fagan

baubles moves a silver scheme from classic to contemporary, especially with the introduction of glittering disco balls.

"Surprise your guests by taking your table scheme in new directions," she adds. "Clusters of paper honeycomb, and pom-pom decorations hung overhead, are a new approach to table decorating, which saves crucial table space and elevates the setting."

## Go for glittering gold

"The Christmas table is an opportunity to go completely OTT and let your creative flair run wild. The whole day is about extravagance, indulgence and glamour, so I love to go a little crazy with the decorating," says Jenny Hurren, founder of Out There Interiors (outthereinteriors.com).

"The food is a beautiful sight in itself, but why not add some glitz and glamour to the proceedings and adorn the table with beautiful place settings, decorative touches and 'the decent' china?"

"My favourite is gold-painted twigs and foliage," adds Jenny. "Eucalyptus leaves look stunning with a touch of gold spray paint."

"Run a few sprigs along the middle of the table, intertwining them through glass stems, around dishes and bowls and dan-

gle them off the end. Use small bunches of them tied with ribbon and a named luggage label as a truly personal place setting.

"If you have the space, add a statement centre piece, such as a quirky gold pineapple, and team the whole look with fresh white linens and elegant glassware."

## Stay true to tradition

"Always start with a theme and keep to one or two key colours, and then build up the setting. Have in mind the general look you want to achieve, for example classic red and white, rustic, opulent or minimal," says Danielle Tolson, co-founder of Tolly McRae (tollymrae.co.uk), specialists in luxury table linen, among other things.

"This year, I'll be using gold as the core theme, with dusky pink accents, and I'm going for an overall opulent effect."

"More is more as far as I'm concerned, and our table will be crammed with flickering candles, sparkling cutlery and glasses."

"For a centrepiece, a glass bowl filled with pine cones, baubles or even a foliage garland is effective."

"Alternatively, lightly spray fruit – pomegranates, pineapples and other exotic fruit – with gold paint and arrange in a clear glass bowl."

"Why not add a string of twinkling fairy lights?"



Wish you all Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

# FLETCHERS



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## BOTTLED ALE

Sadlers 500ml	} 3 for £5.00
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Holden's 500ml	} 3 for £5.00
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Newcastle 500ml	} 3 for £5.00
Hobgoblin/Pedigree/ Abbot Ale/Old Empire/ Wainwright 500ml	
Old Speckled Hen 500ml	} ANY 4 for £5.50
Enville Ale 500ml	
Batham's Bitter 500ml	£1.99 Each case of 8 bottles £14.99
	£1.99 each case of 12 bottles £20.99

## BOTTLED BEER

Coron Extra 330ml	8 for £7.00
Stella 330ml	8 for £6.00
Budweiser 300ml	8 for £5.50
	24 for £15.99
Peroni 620ml	2 for £4.00
Hop House 13 Lager 650ml	2 for £4.00
Stella 660ml	3 for £5.00

## BOTTLED CIDER

Kopparberg (Varieties) 500ml	3 for £5.50
Thatchers (Varieties) 500ml	3 for £5.00
Weston's Vintage 500ml	4 for £5.50
Rattlers Original 500ml	2 for £4.00
Brothers Old Mount, Rekorderling 500ml	ANY 3 FOR £5.00
Crumpron 2.5 ltr/ Strongbow 2ltr	2 FOR £5.50
Weston's Scrumpy 2 ltr Jar/ Old Rose	£4.99 EACH
2 ltr Jar	

## CANS

Carling 8 Cans	£6.50
Carling 500ml	24 CANS £18.49
Banks's Mild/Bitter 500ml	8 CANS £6.50
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Holsten Pils 500ml	8 CANS £7.00
Carlsberg Export 500ml	24 CANS £19.99
John Smith Extra Smooth	8 CANS £7.50
Guinness Draught	8 CANS £7.50
Stella 500ml	} 8 CANS £8.00
Budweiser 500ml	
Carlsberg Pint	} 4 CANS £3.99
Carling Pint	
Carling Black Fruit 500ml	8 CANS £6.50
	24 CANS £18.99
Strongbow Dark Fruit 568ml	4 CANS £5.50
	4 CANS £3.99
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FLETCHERS  
AT



# Enrich your habitat and help protect wildlife too

**PEOPLE'S Trust for Endangered Species (PTES), a UK conservation charity, has released its annual Christmas gift catalogue.**

The creative and quirky range of gift ideas will help the most endangered wildlife across Britain and throughout the world, with 100 per cent of profits going directly to help wildlife in need.

There are gifts to suit all interests varying from improving your own habitat with beautifully designed tea towels and cushions, to supporting conservation projects by giving snow leopards a safe place to roam.

There are also gifts for all budgets from wooden keyrings for £4.50 to original watercolour wildlife illustrations for £45. New items this year range from eco-friendly seedballs to original wildlife themed artwork exclusive to PTES so whether you want to save the bees or protect the pine martens, there is something for everyone.

The full range of wildlife gifts, ideal for anyone wild about wildlife, can be viewed and purchased online at [www.ptes.org/shop](http://www.ptes.org/shop).

**Gifts of Nature (prices range from £10 - £50)**

PTES has some unique gift ideas in their Gifts of Nature range. 100% of the money raised will help save endangered species worldwide. Gift options include:

Honeymoon hamper: providing newly released dormice with food until they can fend for themselves in the wild

Gardener's friend: encouraging the public to create hedgehog holes and connect their gardens to form Hedgehog Highways

Fighting for survival: educating more people in the conservation of stag beetles

Winter wonderland: supporting coppicing practices in ancient woodland to help species such as red squirrels and hazel dormice through winter and spring

Location, location, re-location: relocating the rare pine marten from Scotland to a new lush woodland home in Wales

Tails of the riverbank: helping save water voles in the UK and boost their numbers by improving their riverbank homes

Passage to India: working with villagers in India to plan agricultural work around elephant migratory routes & promoting alternative forms of livelihood

Save orangutan forest: training forest managers in Indonesia to help protect the Bornean orang-utan from extinction

Snow leopard patrol: creating new patrol zones across Mongolia so more snow leopards can roam free

Funky gibbon: training forest rangers to monitor and report illegal poaching of western hoolock gibbons and educating communities to respect this species

**Wildlife Guides & Publications**

For a comprehensive understanding of Britain's mammals in both the countryside and urban environments, PTES has two concise and beautifully illustrated guides so you can learn more about the wildlife living on your doorstep. Urban Mammals: A Concise Guide and Britain's Mammals: A Concise Guide are priced at £9.99 each or both for £15.00.

**Canvas shopping bag**

Do your shopping in style with a beautifully designed laminated canvas bag printed in water based inks. With a large capacity of 38 x 14 x 40cm, it is the perfect size to take wherever you go. Made to a standard approved by 'Bag of Ethics'. Choose from: dormouse or hedgehog motifs. Only £9 each.

**A5 notepads**

Choose from: Mr Badger, Honey the Hedgehog, Rusty the Fox and Vintage Apple. Each fabulously designed notepad has 60 ruled pages. Each design reflects a love of wildlife and nature, and are priced at £3.50 each.

**Dormouse Christmas cards**

Exclusive to PTES, this delightful dormouse Christmas card is sure to make you want to curl up by the fire with a mince pie. Each card is 12.5 x 12.5cm and features the message "Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year". A lovely card to spread some Christmas cheer, and are priced at £4.50 for a pack of ten.



A Book That Takes Its Time, £21.99



Creators of Flow magazine, Irene Smit and Astrid van der Hulst



Remodelista: The Organized Home, £20

# Beautiful new books with pages of pure inspiration

**BOOKS are the perfect gift for Christmas and any time of year, they can be opened and enjoyed again and again.**

Workman Publishing has offered up a feast of new titles, with something to suit everyone's interest and tastes.

With interest growing in the concept of mindfulness, **A Book That Takes Its Time**, £21.99, offers plenty of food for thought.

This one-of-a-kind guide would be the perfect present for a loved one or for yourself. If you've not yet embraced the concept of taking pleasure in the simple things, the here and now and living 'in the moment', this book will take you on a mini mindfulness retreat.

A beautifully presented and very clever creation, it comes from the creators of Flow magazine, Irene Smit and Astrid van der Hulst who say: "We need more stillness, more downtime, more mindfulness. And that's what this book will bring you. In fact we invented something entirely new to do just that."

Each chapter is full of inspirational ideas to encourage you to make more time to learn, create, relax or simply breathe.

## Perspective

It's the perfect antidote to the manic festive season ahead, giving tips to help you worry less, feel more at peace and change your perspective.

It also offers solace in the dark and depressing post-Christmas lull, when it can be easy to fall victim to the January blues.

"Life is so much better when you enjoy living in the now, when you focus more on the beautiful moments and when you don't expect so much of yourself all the time."

There are hands-on activities such as crafts and journals, with stickers, postcards and decorative papers for collaging, enabling you to create a lovely keepsake. Instead of simply reading about the concept, you can actively take part and put its theories into practice.

This is not a traditional page-turner, this is a book that requires you to take your time, indulge and enjoy.

Also available from Workman Publishing is the **John Derian Engagement Calendar** priced at £16.99.

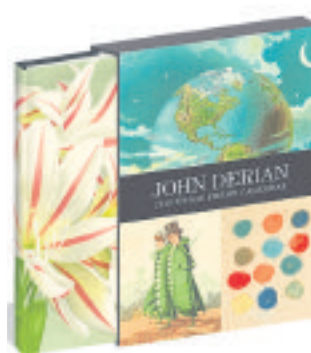
John Derian is an American decoupage artist and designer who transforms printed images from the past. His decoupage plates, platters, paperweights, coasters, and bowls are sold at upscale home stores, in catalogues, and at gift shops worldwide.

The planner pulls together 52 favourite John Derian images in a cross between a desk diary and a calendar, which is small enough to be carried with you.

There is a spread for every week of the year, decorated with all manner of interesting subjects such as anatomical prints,



Beautiful designs on every page – enjoy John Derian's eye for decoupage all year round



The John Derian Engagement Calendar

beetles and a long-lost love note. Together they constitute a beautifully designed and sophisticated product. It comes gift-boxed with a ribbon bookmark and would be the perfect addition to any desk, either at work or in the home office.

The quirky designs transport you to another world, where the imagination runs wild.

One-of-a-kind images are enhanced to create curious and fascinating pieces, from



More examples of John Derian's decoupage creations

pea-pod people to giant eyeballs. Finally, for those who need a little inspiration keeping their home or work space tidy, Workman Publishing has also released **Remodelista: The Organized Home**, £20, full of tips for simple, stylish storage.

This guide put together by Julie Carlson and Margot Guralnick, with photographs by Matthew Williams, encourages readers to buy fewer (and better) things, get rid of the plastic and display, not stash, belongings.

You can lean how to tame the cord jungle, decant and 'think beyond the box'. There are more than 100 tips for room-by-room improvements, with interviews from experts such as a kindergarten teacher, a hotelier and a boat builder on how to make the most of limited space.

With new year resolutions on the horizon, it's the ideal read for the Christmas holidays and will inspire you to get organised for 2018.

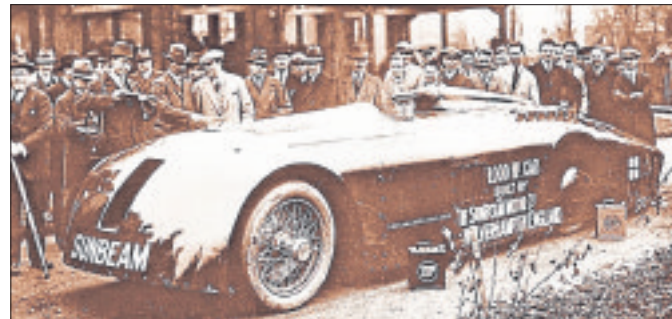




The Sunbeam Silver Bullet which made an unsuccessful land-speed bid in 1930



A Sunbeam 12-16hp parked up for a picnic, circa 1913



The world record-breaking 1000hp Sunbeam which reached 203 mph in 1927



16-hp Sunbeam staff car during the First World War



An aerial view of Sunbeam pre-World War One

# Photo album sheds new light on Sunbeam story

A PHOTO album snapped up at auction has sent ripples of excitement through the small but devoted community of Sunbeam motor car enthusiasts.

The piece of transport history contains photographs and information about every item – from cars to wheel nuts – produced at the Wolverhampton-based Sunbeam factory between 1931-33.

Sunbeam, one of the great names in British car manufacturing, employed 4,500 people at the height of its success in the 1920s. But despite its reputation for quality cars, it fell into financial difficulties and production was stopped in 1935. Rootes took over but many precious records were subsequently lost or thrown out.

Much work has been done by fans of the iconic brand, who launched the Sunbeam Talbot Darracq (STD) Register in 1950 for owners and supporters,

## MEMORY LANE

By Marion Brennan

to preserve documents, drawings and other data relating to the car. They are thrilled by this latest discovery.

Ben Yates, archivist of the STD Register, said: "The album is an important find. We've never had a full record for any period of production so this is really quite special. It's an official company reference volume – we never even knew of the existence of Sunbeam's own listings.

### Continuous

"We have other albums of photos produced by various companies but not a continuous record of production over more than two years, showing not only all the company's products but the works, state-of-the-art machines and people working them."

The group paid almost £1,000 for the album at a recent auction by Cutlstones in Wolverhampton. It was

previously owned by a local man, now 72, whose grandfather worked at Sunbeam, thought to be as a toolmaker.

His father also worked for the company, joining directly from school, and towards the end of its existence was based in the bus section. He then transferred to Guy Motors, who bought the Sunbeam Trolleybus Company in 1949.

According to the vendor, who does not wish to be named, his father 'rescued' the album in 1935 when Sunbeam went into liquidation as the volume, along with the majority of company records were simply being thrown out.

Mr Yates said: "This is a story we have heard from many former Sunbeam employees, particularly at the Wolverhampton rallies the STD organised from the 1950s until the Centenary Rally in 1999. There are, apparently, no longer any surviving employees."

Realising its importance, and with no descendants to pass the album on to, the vendor offered it for sale.



Sunbeam 16-20hp belonged to an Indian prince



How former Sunbeam factory used to look



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# Grow your own garlic to produce more flavour



**FED up with dry and shrivelled shop-bought garlic? For a stronger, fresher flavour, you can't beat home-grown, says HANNAH STEPHENSON.**

IF YOU'RE finding that shop-bought garlic doesn't have the intense flavour you require, then it's time to start growing your own, which will give you more choice and more flavour.

Here's what you need to know...

## 1. Which type of garlic do you choose?

There are hardneck and softneck varieties. Softneck are the ones which supermarkets tend to stock, which have firm bulbs, lots of cloves and store well. Hardneck bulbs don't store as well - but it's often said they have better flavour. Elephant garlic, which produces huge underground 'heads' up to 10cm (4in) across made up of a few massive cloves, is actually not a true garlic. It is in fact related to the leek, and its cloves are mild and sweet.

## 2. When do you plant garlic?

Do it from November to December, as garlic needs a period of cold to establish healthy bulbs which will be ripe for harvesting next summer. You can also plant in February or March, but garlic planted in the cooler months usually has larger heads as it has a longer growing season. The earlier you start, the better the choice of variety.

## 3. Where do you plant?

You'll need a weed-free, sunny spot and well-drained soil with added organic matter, such as compost. Make a drill around 2.5cm deep, split your bulb into cloves for planting and plant each clove, pointed tip upwards, so it's just below the surface, 15cm (6in) apart in each direction.

## 4. Is garlic low-maintenance?

Garlic doesn't require much work. It will need watering in dry spells and you'll have to push back any cloves that the birds have pulled up. But other than that, it's light work, really.

## 5. When do you harvest garlic?

As soon as reasonable-sized heads have formed, but the plants are still green and leafy, you can start harvesting, which is from June onwards. Only pull what you need as it won't keep for long after lifting.

The foliage of the plants left in the ground will gradually turn yellow, then brown. When it's turned brown, dig up the remaining plants and let the bulbs dry off in the sun before storing in a cool, dry place under cover.



Electric cars of the future could supply energy as well as consuming it

# How electric cars may help householders' energy bills

TWO recent news stories about electric cars could benefit Midlands householders in the future believes an energy expert.

The first was Chancellor Philip Hammond's Budget proposals with a £400m investment in electric vehicles, and boosting the purchase of clean fuel cars with more roadside chargers.

The second was the £80 million Government funding for a national centre in Coventry to develop electric vehicles batteries which will lead to 10,000 new jobs in the city.

"Obviously that is good news for the environment and the economy," said Ron Fox, of Noreus Ltd at Keele. "The added bonus is that every electric car has a big battery which will be a huge benefit as the problem in the future will not be generating electricity, but storing it."

With green energy becoming increasingly abundant and cheaper as once the wind turbine or the solar panels have been built there are only maintenance costs. Wind and sun are free whereas coal, gas and nuclear are losing ground. Already wind-generated electricity is on offer

at 5.75p a kilowatt hour compared to the 9.25p a kilowatt hour to be charged by the new Hinckley Point nuclear power station.

Because green energy is intermittent with the weather so the search is on for better storage to prevent paying big consumers to switch off their power at peak times or returning to the old technologies of coal, gas and diesel.

Ron added: "Just as the car engine is left unused for much of the time so the solution may be to pay electric car owners to take excess power from their vehicles' batteries."

By 2040 when the Government plans to ban the sale of new diesel and petrol cars there could be more than 25 million electric cars in the UK.

"The system of the future will have to be decentralised and interactive like the internet on our computers. Customers will become producers supplying power from their rooftop solar panels or their car battery back into the Grid when needed. Electric car owners will be able to charge their vehicles overnight using cheap electricity as some do already with storage heaters."

# Tired-looking carpet could hide a lovely wood floor

Report by Richard Burr

**YOU know what? Underneath that tired, possibly stained, dust mite-infested carpet, there's very likely a wooden floor that could look a million times better - if you knew how to sand and paint it.**

Luckily for you, I did just that recently, so here are my tips for doing it yourself...

## 1. Clear the room

Sanding a wooden floor can be dusty, especially if you have gaps between floorboards to fill. Take all your furniture out, cover shelves and mantels with plastic sheeting and take the curtains or blinds down. This will save you hours of time (and headache) later, and it's never a bad idea to stick the curtains into the dry cleaners when you've got them down.

## 2. Prepare the floor

Your wooden floor may have cuts in it from electrical or plumbing fitting, or from various repairs. You may even need to replace a board or two if they're badly damaged.

Fill any gaps you find with two-part wood filler. If your gaps are wider than 5mm, you may need to roll up some newspaper and press it into the gap to give you something to fill up against. Carefully lift any mouldings you find, which can sometimes sit between floorboards and a skirting board. If you lift these gently, you might be able to salvage them, otherwise most DIY stores have huge moulding selections you can replace them with.

If you had carpets down, you'll need to lift the gripper rods and any staples that held your underlay down. Also, if you've taken carpet up, you'll need to get a different profile of threshold strip for any doorways into the room.

If you're going to paint the floor, fix down any loose, squeaky boards by screwing them down before you start filling. However, if you want to varnish your floor, use brad nails to secure your boards instead, as it's a better look on wooden boards. It's very important not to screw or nail down the middle of the end of your floorboard, as this is where the pipes and electrics will run if you have them.

## 3. Get sanding

If your room is small, you have the time - and if your fingers could stand up to the grating they'd get - you could sand your floor by hand. But the best plan is to hire a drum floor sander from any building hire shop. They are a bit heavy, but you can have them delivered with plenty of sandpaper, and they'll do the job very quickly and easily.

Use 40 grit sandpaper to start, if you have old varnish or lots of ground-in debris, then use 120 grit to finish, so the surface ends up smooth. Work methodically up and down



Richard Burr hard at work sanding down a floor



You can paint, stain or varnish your sanded floor



Sanding down a fine old floor

the room, making sure you don't sand in one place for too long - the coarse sandpaper can really eat into the boards. Finish sanding the edges of the floor where the sander can't quite reach by hand (or you could also borrow an edging sander), and then sweep and vacuum up the dust. And it's a good idea to shake out your dust sheets now, so no dust falls on your floor while you're painting.

## 4. Choose the right paint

You can paint, stain or varnish your sanded floor in a wide range of colours and

finishes, but make sure you buy products that are specifically for floors - they are harder wearing and certainly worth the small extra cost per litre. You can use 3" or 4" brushes to paint with. If you use a roller, which is quicker, it will leave your floor with a stippled effect, which doesn't look so good on a painted floor. With a brush, you can lay off your paint work for a smoother finish - this means painting in the direction of the grain of wood, and painting any drips back into the wood.

If you are painting your floor, you'll need

to put at least two coats of undercoat down first. Make sure you use a compatible undercoat to the top coat you are using - they are often designed to work together.

**5. Don't paint yourself into a corner**  
Most importantly, start on the far edge of the room and don't paint yourself into a corner (this does happen, and is a right laugh when the apprentices do it!).

If you intend to keep your doors on their hinges during the job, make sure you paint the floor behind them before you paint yourself out of the room.



## Sister pays tribute to victim of house fire



**Gary Gooding, 42, from Netherton, could not be revived after he was found in his burning house**

THE victim of a house fire thought to have been started by a lithium battery has been named as Gary Gooding.

The battery was on charge at the Blackbrook Road property in Netherton when the fire started, say investigators.

Emergency services were called at 6.10am on December 1 to the property where Mr Gooding, aged 42, was helped by firefighters but died at the scene.

His sister Carly Gooding took to Facebook to leave an emotional tribute and to warn others to beware of chargers as a potential fire hazard.

She said: "Our family will never be the same again but if we can save another family having to go through this pain we would like to remind and warn everyone to make sure their smoke alarms are working and also unplug all electricals when they go to bed."

"We can never bring our brother back but we don't want anymore lives lost through this tragic accident."

# Hospital is closing to create more home help

**A HOSPITAL specialising in mental health treatment will close following a shake-up of services in Dudley.**

Birch Day Hospital, on King Street, is being shut to make way for a new mental health service that will see patients treated at home.

The decision has been made by Dudley & Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust, which believes the changes will make it easier for patients to get help.

A trust spokesman said: "We are working with patients and families to support them safely through the transition of care."

Careful consideration was taken over the closure, the trust says, and comes after a public consultation.

## Assessment

As part of the restructure, patients will be able to seek assessment every day of the week and will also be entitled to three visits a day from a carer.

The service is aimed at older people and has been given the go ahead by Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group.

**By Jamie Brassington**

The spokesman added: "Patients that require psychological interventions will still be able to access these services and we are exploring options to deliver these closer to home in the community."

"The new service will provide enhanced support for patients including a specialist older adult home treatment service, avoiding unnecessary hospital admissions. Alongside this, assessment for patients in the community will be extended to seven days a week."

The move will also see money set aside to create new mental health services for patients suffering with dementia, delivered via Dudley Dementia Gateways.

# Smooth run for social enterprise initiative



**Amy Kelly, left, and Michelle Davies of Candidate Source with Steven Beckley from Dudley's Lunch On The Run**

A SOCIAL enterprise in Dudley is helping to give more people with learning disabilities access to expert training and the chance of employment thanks to the support of a recruitment business.

Candidate Source has raised more than £4,500 as part of its commitment to support Dudley-based Lunch on the Run (LOTR). This has involved a number of fundraising activities, including a sell-out Elvis Tribute night, cake

mornings and helping LOTR secure new contracts to provide catering services to corporate clients.

It has also agreed to cover the costs of an additional training place with Steven Beckley currently gaining new skills in his bid to secure a job for the first time in 15 years. Candidate Source has covered his salary for 12 months in paid work at Lunch on the Run, in order to boost his CV.

"When we agreed to support Lunch

on the Run we set ourselves the target of generating about £2,500," explained Michelle Davies, managing director.

However, when we got to know the social enterprise a little better and saw first-hand the excellent work it does, we knew we needed to up our game."

Lunch on the Run currently supports 17 people, providing training, life skills and important work experience in its catering business and coffee shop in Stafford Street in Dudley.

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# They're just too good to be true!

**O**h what a night! The internationally acclaimed stage sensation, Jersey Boys, is working its way back to Birmingham with a festive run at the city's New Alexandra Theatre.

The hit musical has won 57 major awards, including the Olivier Award for Best New Musical, and will be on from tomorrow until January 6.

Jersey Boys tells the true life story of four boys from the wrong side of the tracks who wrote their own songs, invented their own unique sound, and sold 100 million records worldwide as Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons.

Featuring hit after legendary hit including Beggin', December 1963 (Oh What A Night), Can't Take My Eyes Off You, Walk Like A Man, Bye Bye Baby, Big Girls Don't Cry and many more, Jersey Boys is a story full of heart, humour and sheer musical razzmatazz.

The show features a starry cast of West End actors, including Simon Bailey who stars as Tommy DeVito.

Simon has carved out an impressive career after starring in Bat Boy, Marry Me A Little, I Can't Sing! The X-Factor Musical, Phantom of the Opera, Parade, Passion, Les Miserables and Joseph.

He was present when Jersey Boys began its nine-year run in London and went to the first night. "I didn't know about the music at first. But I went to the first night and within four minutes I knew I had to do it. I've bided my time until the part became available.

"To be honest with you, the show is so well written and so slick. The story is fast-paced and intelligently written. Essentially, you get the same story – the story of Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons – told by four different people. Seeing everyone's individual take on what happened is great because everyone gets to tell their side of the story. The way that the music comes in is brilliant. It's so fast-paced. You kind of forget you're watching something. It's seamless and faultless."

### IDENTIFY

Simon loves shows that give fans the maximum value for money.

"You are fully entertained for two-and-a-half hours. You just want to watch it again and again and again.

"I saw it 8 or 10 times and I became a fan of the show before I got to be in it."

The present tour features Michael Watson as Frankie Valli, Simon as Tommy DeVito, Declan Egan as Bob Gaudio and Lewis Griffiths as Nick Massi. All four have previously performed their roles in Jersey Boys to great acclaim: Michael and Simon in the West End, Declan in the West End and Australia, and Lewis in the first UK and Ireland tour.

Simon was delighted to be cast as DeVito. "Tommy is great. The thing I loved about it is that you need to find something you can identify with. I always identified with his desire to succeed. While I may not agree with him methods – but they make him fun to play – I respect and admire his desire to succeed. If you are growing up where they grew up, you either went into the army and die, go into the mob and die or be a star and don't die. Being in a band got him out of the wrong place. He did what he had to do. He discovered Frankie and it all came together. Tommy was the catalyst."

Simon spends most of his time in London's West End but was thrilled to be given a chance to get back on the road.

"This is my third tour. I did the Phantom of the Opera 25th anniversary back in 2012 and I did something at the start of my career. I've always enjoyed travel, internationally and nationally, so being on the road is great. Leaving London for a while is no bad thing, it refreshes you. I love the energy the audiences bring. We are in for a couple of weeks at a time and the audiences want to enjoy it."

Simon says the days of getting great shows in the West End and second tier shows in the provinces are long

Walk like a man – Jersey Boys will appear at the New Alex



*To be honest, the show is so well written and so slick*

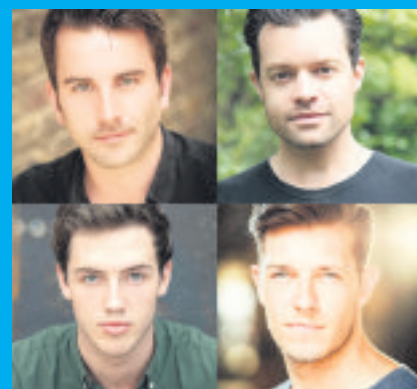
gone. These days, there's no difference in quality. Fans at Birmingham can look forward to a first class show.

"You get the great shows in the provinces these days. That dividing line between the West End and the rest of the UK is obsolete.

"I grew up going to the West End. I was very, very lucky. My parents were very much into the theatre. I was one of the lucky ones who went to see West End theatre from a very early age. One of the first things I ever saw was Joseph at the palladium with Jason Donovan. I will never forget the feeling of being in the theatre and it was so big and wonderful and magical. I was watching this whole brand new life and story on stage. It kind of blew my mind. I did a show at the Palladium a couple of years ago called I Can't Sing. I remember walking out on stage and seeing the seat I was sat in all those years before. It made me feel like a very lucky human being. Now I have the ability to transport other people and that's a real privilege."

ANDY RICHARDSON

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.





Fairy Godmother Beverley Knight



# Beverley leads all-star cast in panto spectacular

WOLVERHAMPTON soul diva Beverley Knight will make her pantomime debut in Cinderella, this year's Birmingham Hippodrome spectacular.

Beverley will be starring alongside Strictly Come Dancing 2016 finalist Danny Mac, Brum panto favourite Matt Slack, pop singer and Dancing On Ice star Suzanne Shaw, and veteran comedy duo The Grumbleweeds. The show will also feature the most faaabulous Ugly Sisters, Ceri Dupree and Phil Randall.

Cinderella promises all the ingredients of the perfect Hippodrome panto – great cast, laugh-out-loud comedy, lots of pop music, dazzling special effects and extravagant costumes. Cinderella runs from Tuesday until January 28.

Other festive shows for the family include 101 Dalmations, Debbie Issit's version of the story that became a Disney classic, with actors and amazing puppets at Birmingham Rep until January 13.

Wolverhampton's panto at the Grand stars singer Gareth Gates with Lisa Riley and the Black Country's own Doreen Tipton in Jack And The Beanstalk, at the Lichfield Street theatre until January 14.

Arena Birmingham is putting on a big event panto in the city centre mega-venue from December 20 to Christmas Eve with Peter Pan, starring Martin Kemp (of EastEnders and Spandau Ballet) as Captain Hook and Bradley Walsh (TV host and new Doctor Who companion) as Mr Smee. With a cast of 100 performers it is described as 'the world's biggest panto'.

# Festive music from pop to carols



There's a feast of festive music ahead this weekend and in the run up to Christmas, from pop to folk, classical to carols.

Slade get things rocking with Dave Hill and Don Powell in a sold out gig at Bilston's Robin 2 tomorrow night (Friday), whilst Midlands Hospital Choir Sing Noel in two concerts at Birmingham Town Hall tomorrow, 2.15 and 7pm.

Brum rocker Roy Wood brings his special Rockmas concert to the Symphony Hall on Saturday featuring special guest Paul Young. Expect to hear I Wish It

Could Be Christmas Everyday. Also on Saturday 'the Barnsley Nightingale', folk singer-songwriter Kate Rusby, brings her Christmas show to Birmingham Town Hall. Meanwhile, '70s hits, including Rivers of Babylon, will be revived at the Robin 2 by Boney M featuring original member Maizie Williams, who grew up in Birmingham.

Celebrated Welsh singer Katherine Jenkins, pictured, performs her festive concert at the Symphony Hall on Sunday evening. There is a Christmas Carol Singalong led by Jonathan Cohen and featuring West End star Louise Dearman at Symphony Hall on

Monday at 2.30pm and then in the evening the same venue host Classic Carols with the City of Birmingham Choir and readings from actor and TV presenter Sir Tony Robison.

On Monday night Birmingham Town Hall hosts Yuletide laughs and music when the Rainer Hersch Orchestra present Christmas No1 Pop Singalong.

For three consecutive nights, Tuesday to Thursday at Symphony Hall, A Choral Christmas features City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Chorus in concerts hosted by Ore Oduba.

# Singer has home city concert date

ACCLAIMED Wolverhampton singer-songwriter Dan Whitehouse has a homecoming concert at Newhampton Arts Centre in Dunkley Street on Sunday. Dan, who released his fourth album That's Where I Belong last year, will be performing with a band and is supported by The Little Unsaid and Matt Sayers. The seated concert starts at 7.30pm and tickets cost £10. The 38-year-old musician will return in January as part of the city's Literary Festival to give a songwriting workshop.



# Time to take trip down the digital rabbit hole

A PROFESSIONAL cast is joined by an ensemble of 26 students from Birmingham Ormiston Academy for a production of Lewis Carroll's Alice In Wonderland at Birmingham's Old Rep theatre, next to Grand Central. Grace Dean takes on the title role of Alice with Alec Fellows-Bennett as the Mad Hatter in a show that will feature morning and afternoon performances until December 30. Audiences can expect a puppet cat and a digital rabbit hole in this new adaptation of a classic. This will be the third Christmas production produced by Birmingham Ormiston Academy, the regional academy for digital, creative and performing arts. The creative team are led by Scott Le Crass who has directed both locally and nationally since graduating from the Birmingham Rep Foundry programme.

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WOLVERHAMPTON  
MAGAZINE



## Shirley Ballas

## **Strictly Come Dancing - The Final (BBC1, 6.30pm)**

Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman host the live grand final, which sees the final three celebrity contestants and their partners taking to the stage in dances that will determine whether they claim the glitterball trophy. Shirley Ballas, Bruno Tonioli, Craig Revel Horwood and Darcey Bussell offer their comments and score the performances, but as always, their opinions are merely guidance - the decision as to who waltzes off with this year's title is down to the viewers' vote. As the winner is decided, the rest of the 2017 cast are expected to return for one final, celebratory group performance.

**6.00 Breakfast. 10.00 Saturday Kitchen** Live. **11.30** Nigel Slater's 12 tastes of Christmas. (R) **12.00** Football Focus. **1.00** BBC News. **2.00** The News and Sports Personality of the Year 2017 – The Contenders. (R) **2.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **3.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **4.00** Final Score. **5.25** BBC News. **5.35** Regional Programme. **5.40** Pointless Celebrities. (R)

**6.30 Strictly Come Dancing – The Final.** Tess Daly and Claudia Finkelman host the live grand final, which sees the final three celebrities competing with their partners taking to the stage in dances that will determine whether they claim the glitterball trophy. Shirley Ballas, Bruno Tonioli, Craig Reel Horwood and Darcey Bussell offer their comments and score the performances, but as always, their opinions are merely guidance – the decision as to who walks off with this year's title is down to the viewers' vote. As the winner is decided, the rest of the 2017 cast are expected to return for one final, celebratory group performance.

**9.00 Michael McIntyre's Big Show.** The comedian hosts another evening of entertainment, as Irish singer and One Direction graduate Alvaro Soler performs on stage. Also delighting the masses tonight is Michael's fellow funnyman Jason Manford, and actress, comedienne and accomplished prat-feller Miranda Hart risks offending her family and friends as she hands her phone over in Celebrity Send-to-All. Plus, an A&E doctor is tricked into believing the theatre is actually a grand hotel as the host stages another ambitious Unexpected Star stunt.

**10.00 BBC News; Weather.**

**10.20 Match of the Day.** Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League matches, including Manchester City v Tottenham Hotspur.

**11.45 The NFL Show.** Mark Chapman is joined by former players Osi Umenyiora and Jason Bell to present highlights of Thursday night games, plus a look at the major stories shaping the NFL world.

**12.15 Film: Surviving Christmas.** (2004)

**1.40 Weather for the Week Ahead. 1.45** BBC News.

**6.15** Holiday of My Lifetime with Len Goodman. (R) **7.00** Nature's Wildest Events. (R) **7.30** Nature's Nightmares of Nature. (R) **8.00** Deadly 50. (R) **8.30** Show Me What You're Made Of. UK. **9.00** Saturday Mash-Up! **11.00** Penguins on a Plane: Great Animal Movies. (R) **12.00** Raymond Blanc: How to Cook Well. (R) **12.30** Tom Kerridge's Best Ever Dishes. (R) **1.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **1.45** Coast. (R) **2.20** Garden Rescue. (R) **2.50** Mastermind. (R) **3.20** Film: Possession (1977). Psychological thriller, starring Joan Crawford. **5.05** Talking Pictures: Roger Moore.

**6.05** **Film: Escape to Athena.** (1979) Second World War Allied PoWs incarcerated on a Greek island plan to defy the SS by breaking out of prison and pulling off an art robbery, with the help of their liberal-minded camp commandant. Action adventure, with Roger Moore, David Niven, Telly Savalas, Elliott Gould, Stefanie Powers and Claudia Cardinale.

**8.00** **Attenborough's Life That Glows.** David Attenborough explores the world of bioluminescence, the often spectacular natural light produced by creatures including glow-worms, fireflies and plankton, using specially designed cameras to film some of the new generation of deep-sea submersibles and robots to record instances in the very deep ocean. The programme shows a millipede glowing on the forest floor in California, the mesmerising flashing light patterns of the synchronous firefly, the spooky glow of rare deep-sea fish and luminous earth worms in France. (R)

**9.00** **Feud: Bette and Joan.** New series. Drama exploring the rivalry between Bette Davis and Joan Crawford, beginning in 1962, as Joan considers a collaboration. Starring Jessica Lange and Susan Sarandon.

**9.55** **Feud: Bette and Joan.** Filming begins on What Ever Happened to Beverly? and despite still being at odds, Bette and Joan unite as they campaign to get rid of an attractive female co-star.

**10.45** **QI XL.**

**11.30** **Jeff Lynne's ELO – Wembley or Bust.**

**12.05** **Film: Shadow of the Vampire.**

**12.20** **2.10** **This Is BBC Two.**

**6.00** *CITV*: **6.30** **6.10** Bottom Knockers Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knockers Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** *Cartoon Network*: **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors. **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Fangbone. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Thunderbirds Are Go. **9.00** Scrambled!: Wishart. (R) **9.25** *ITV News*: **9.30** Saturday Night with Martin. (R) **11.25** *Gino's Italian Coastal Escape*. (R) **11.50** *Countryside*. (R) **12.20** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **12.45** *ITV News*: **Weather: **12.55** Endeavour. (R) **2.55** *Film*: The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas. (2000) Family comedy prequel, starring Mark Addy. **4.35** The Chase. (R) **5.35** Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs. (R)**

**6.05** *Regional Programme*: **Weather**. **6.15** *ITV News*: **Weather**. **6.30** *Film*: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey. (2012) Unassuming hobbit Frodo Baggins is called out of his comfortable life by Gandalf the wizard volunteers him for a dangerous quest. He joins a party of dwarves who are on a mission to reclaim their lost homeland, which has been taken over by a dragon. When the group journeys into the Misty Mountains, Bilbo becomes separated from the dwarves and falls into a cave where he finds himself confronted by Gollum and forced to play a riddle game. It is set in Middle-earth 60 years before the events of The Lord of the Rings and is the first part of Peter Jackson's fantasy adventure trilogy based on J.R.R. Tolkien's novel, starring Martin Freeman, James Nesbitt, Richard Armitage, Jake Gyllenhaal, Ken Stott, Kate Blanchett, Ian Holm and Christopher Lee.

**9.45** *ITV News*: **Weather**. **10.00** *Film*: The Hangover. (2009) Three men on a stag weekend in Las Vegas wake up to find they have lost the groom and cannot remember the night before. Comedy, with Bradley Cooper. **11.55** *Tonight at the London Palladium*. Bradley Walsh welcomes ABC's Ben Sykes to the West End cast of Guys and Dolls, singing Gregory Porter and classical guitarist Milos to the world-famous stage. (R)

**12.45** *Jackpot247*. **3.00** The Hungry Sailors. (R) **3.50** *ITV Newscreen*.

6.55 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R)  
7.20 The Big Bang Theory. (R) 8.15 Frasier. (R) 8.40  
The Big Bang Theory. (R) 9.35 The Simpsons.  
(R) 10.05 The Simpsons. (R) 10.35 The  
Simpsons. (R) 11.05 Film: Holiday in  
Handcuffs. (2007) 12.50 Come Dine with  
Me Christmas. (R) 1.20 Come Dine with  
Me Christmas. (R) 1.55 Come Dine with  
Me Christmas. (R) 2.25 Come Dine with  
Me Christmas. (R) 2.55 Come Dine with  
Me Christmas. (R) 3.30 Grand Designs.  
(R) 4.30 Best Laid Plans. 5.35 Channel 4  
News.

6.00 **Word of the Year.** Susie Dent is  
joined by a selection of celebrity  
guests to reveal which prominent  
term has been picked by Oxford  
Dictionaries to become the "Word  
of the Year" for 2017. The usual  
mix of inventive insults,  
fashionable portmanteaus and  
unusual descriptions have formed  
the shortlist this year, taking in  
everything from Kim Jong Un's  
unexpected use of the word  
"dotage" to describe Donald  
Trump, to an explosion in the use  
of the word "snowflake" to  
describe people with an inflated  
sense of their uniqueness. Joining  
Susie to pick through this year's  
crop of linguistic treasures are Jo  
Brand, Sara Pascoe, Nish Kumar,  
Aisling Bea, Rick Edwards and  
Jamie Laing.

7.00 **Guy Martin vs the Robot Car.**  
The presenter explores the world  
of advanced self-driving vehicles,  
attempting to build one of his own  
and taking on a computer-  
controlled car in a race. (R)

8.00 **The World's Most Expensive  
Presents.** Cameras follow  
craftsmen and women producing  
lavish gifts with price tags to  
match, including a 24-carat gold-  
plated bike worth £250,000. (R)

9.00 **Film: Pitch Perfect.** (2012)  
Comedy, starring Anna Kendrick,  
Rebel Wilson and Elizabeth Banks.

11.10 **Film: The Inbetweeners Movie.**  
(2011) Awkward teenagers Simon,  
Will, Jay and Neil head to Greece  
for a wild holiday – but things don't  
turn out to plan. Comedy, with Joe  
Thomas, Simon Bird, James  
Buckley and Blake Harcourt.

1.00 **Film: Tomorrow.** When the War  
Began. (2010) 2.40 The Last Leg. (R)  
3.35 Hollyoaks. 5.40 Extreme Cake  
Makers. (R)

**6.00 Milkshake! 9.50** The Gadget Show. (R) **10.45 Film: Nativity 3: Dude,** Where's My Dude? (2014) **12.55 Film: One Christmas Eve.** (2014) Family comedy, starring Anne Heche. **2.40 Film: Love Always, Santa.** (2016) **4.25 Film: A Mariah Carey's Christmas Melody.** (2015) **5.25 5 News Update.** **5.30 Film: A Mariah Carey's Christmas Melody.** (2015) Concluded.

**6.05 Sinkholes: Buried Underground.** Documentary examining the underlying forces behind sinkholes, which can swallow streets, rip up motorways and even drag unfortunate bystanders to their deaths. (R)

**7.00 Sinkholes: Sucked Under.** Geologist Tom Backhouse investigates sinkholes caused by collapsed mine shafts, including one in Gosforth that opened up in front of a flat and led down to an abandoned mine. (R)

**8.00 Sinkholes: Sucked to Death.** Documentary examining the underlying forces behind sinkholes, which can swallow streets, rip up motorways and even drag unfortunate bystanders to their deaths. Last in the series. (R)

**8.55 5 News Weekend.**

**9.00 Football on 5: The Championship.** Colin Murray introduces highlights from the weekend's games, including Cardiff City v Hull City and Sunderland v Fulham.

**10.00 Football on 5: Goal Rush.** Colin Murray introduces highlights from the weekend's games in League One and Two, including Doncaster Rovers v Oldham Athletic and Exeter City v Stevenage.

**10.30 NCIS: New Orleans.** Pride investigates a murder on board a deep-sea oil rig, but his placed in peril when the team discovers a gas leak on-site is on the verge of causing a catastrophic explosion.

**11.20 NCIS: New Orleans.** Pride faces a conflict of interests when a hacker collective led by one of his old contacts is implicated in the theft of thousands of computer records from government files.

**12.15 SuperCasino.** **3.10 Harrogate: A Yorkshire Christmas.** (R) **4.50 House Doctor.** (R) **5.15 Wildlife SOS.** (R) **5.40 Chinese Food in Minutes.** (R) **5.55 Access.** (R)

**TV2**  
**11.00** All Aboard! The Sleigh Ride **9.00**  
 Witnesses: A Frozen Death **10.55** The  
 Vietnam War **11.50** Rich Hall's You Can  
 Hell, I'm Going to Texas **1.20**  
 Natural World **2.20** Flamenco: Gypsy  
 Soul **3.20** Close

**TV22**  
**11.25** Take Me Out Celebrity Special  
**12.30** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here!  
 Coming Out **1.35** Mr Bean **2.45** Film: **Mr.  
 Bean's Holiday** (2007) **3.45** FYI Daily  
**4.50** Film: Mr Bean's Holiday (2007)  
**5.35** FYI: Yogi Bear (2010) **5.35** FYI  
**5.40** Film: Yogi Bear (2010) **6.10**  
 Film: Liar Liar (1997) **7.10** FYI Daily **7.15**  
 Film: Liar Liar (1997) **7.55** FYI: The  
 Fast and the Furious: Tokyo Drift (2006)  
**8.55** FYI Daily **9.00** Film: The Fast and  
 the Furious: Tokyo Drift (2006) **10.00**  
 Celebrity Guy Christmas Special **11.00**  
 Family Guy **12.30** American Dad! **1.25**  
 The Cleveland Show **1.55** Celebrity Guy  
 Christmas Special **2.45** Totally Bonkers  
 Guinness World Records

**TV3**  
**12.40** Film: Columbo Goes to the  
 Guillotine (1989) **2.40** The Casebook of  
 Sherlock Holmes **5.00** Film: Mamma  
 Mia! (2008) **6.05** FYI Daily **6.10** Film:  
 Mamma Mia! (2008) **6.55** FYI Daily  
 Christie's Marple **9.00** Granchester  
**11.10** Hattie **12.55** Film: Up Pompeii  
 (1971) **2.00** FYI Daily

**TV4**  
**11.10** Film: The Last Sunset (1961)  
**12.10** FYI Daily **12.15** Film: The Last  
 Sunset (1961) **1.30** ITV Channel Live from  
 Cheltenham. Coverage from Cheltenham  
 and Doncaster. **4.00** Storage Wars: Texas  
**5.00** Film: Paranoia (2013) **6.00** FYI  
 Daily **6.05** Film: Paranoia (2013) **7.15**  
 Film: Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure  
 (1989) **8.20** FYI Daily **8.25** Film: Bill &  
 Ted's Excellent Adventure (1989) **9.00**  
 Film: Navy Seals (1990) **10.05** FYI  
**10.10** Film: Navy Seals (1990) **11.20**  
 Film: Universal Soldier: Day  
 of Reckoning (2012) **12.20** FYI Daily

**TV4**  
**11.45** Film: A Turtle's Tale: Sammy's  
 Adventures (2010) **1.30** The Goldbergs  
**2.00** The Big Bang Theory **9.00** Film: The  
 Hunger Games (2012) **11.50** Gogglebox  
**12.00** The Inbetweeners **3.30** Rude Tube  
**4.25** Rude(s) Tube

**Film4**  
**11.00** Judy Moody and the Not Bummer  
 Summer (2011) **1.00** Four Girls (2012)  
 The Volcano (1997) **4.50** The Return of  
 the Musketeers (1989) **6.55** X-Men  
 (2000) **9.00** Men in Black (1997) **10.55**  
 The Purge: Anarchy (2014)

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## Express & Start



CHOICE



Alan Sugar

**The Apprentice (BBC1, 9pm)**  
The two finalists take on their last challenge to win a coveted investment from Alan Sugar, with hand-picked teams of contestants from the series returning to aid them in their endeavours. They face a three-day challenge to create brands and adverts to pitch to a room full of experts - but a poor commercial and an uninspiring brand name do neither candidate any favours. Last in the series.

BBC1

**6.00** Breakfast. **7.35** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Fern Britton Meets Rev Rose Hudson-Wilkin. **11.00** Regional Programme. **12.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News. Weather. **1.15** Mary Berry's Country House Secrets. (R) **2.15** Songs of Praise. **2.50** Film: Toy Story 2. (1999) Animated sequel, with the voice of Tom Hanks. **4.20** Blue Planet II. (R) **5.20** BBC News. **5.35** Regional Programme. **5.45** Countryfile. **6.45** **Sports Personality of the Year 2017.** Gary Lineker, Clive Baldwin and Gabby Logan present this year's ceremony live from the Echo Arena in Liverpool. Andy Murray was presented the prestigious main award in 2016, his third overall and second in successive years. However, he is not in contention this year after an injury-plagued campaign. The shortlist this time is world heavyweight boxing champion Anthony Joshua, four-time Tour de France winner Chris Froome, Formula 1 world champion Lewis Hamilton, short-track speed skater Elise Christie, Tottenham Hotspur striker Harry Kane, British tennis number one Johanna Konta, world superbike champion Jonathan Rea, Paralympian sprinter Jonnie Peacock, track legend Mo Farah, breaststroke world champion Adam Peaty, England cricketer Anya Shrubsole and Olympic taekwondo medalist Bianca Walkden. The Team of the Year, Coach of the Year, Lifetime Achievement, Overseas Sports Personality of the Year, Young Sports Personality of the Year, Unsung Hero and Helen Rollason awards will also be handed out. **9.00** **The Apprentice.** The two finalists take on their last challenge to win an investment from Alan Sugar, with contestants from the series returning to aid them in their endeavours. Last in the series. **10.00** **The Apprentice: You're Hired.** Rhod Gilbert is joined by the winner, the runner-up and Lord Sugar himself, as the business tycoon reveals the reasons behind his final decision. Last in the series. **11.00** BBC News. **11.20** Regional Programme. **11.30** Ronny Chieng: International Student. **11.55** Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.00** BBC News.

BBC2

**6.05** Coast. (R) **7.05** Gardeners' World. (R) **7.35** The Secret History of the British Garden. (R) **8.35** Countryfile. (R) **9.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. (R) **11.00** Nigel Slater's 12 Tastes of Christmas. (R) **11.30** My Life on a Plate. (R) **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. **1.00** Escape to the Country. **1.30** Live Equestrian: Olympia 2017. Coverage of the sixth day of the Olympia International Horse Show. **4.35** Ski Sunday. **5.20** Film: Nativity! (2009) Comedy, starring Martin Freeman. **7.00** **Life in Polar Bear Town** with Gordon Buchanan. Wildlife cameraman Gordon Buchanan visits the community of Churchill, Manitoba, on the shores of Canada's Hudson Bay. For two months every year, the people of Churchill must share their town with huge packs of polar bears, which gather at the bay every autumn to wait for the sea ice to form, so they can begin their winter hunt. Gordon goes on patrol with the "bear cops" charged with ensuring the towns residents - and the bears themselves - stay safe, and meets the bin-men who must dodge bears every day as they deliver refuse to the dump. He also illustrates the dangers of living in the "polar bear capital of the world" as he interviews a young woman who was mauled by a bear, right in the middle of Churchill's main street. (R) **8.00** **James May's Toy Stories: The Motorcycle Diaries.** The Top Gear presenter sets out to build a motorbike and sidecar entirely out of Meccano and complete a lap of the Isle of Man's TT circuit with passenger Oz Clarke. (R) **9.00** **The Alternativity.** Documentary about the making of a contemporary performance inspired by the nativity story. **10.00** **Delectoclists Christmas Special.** **10.30** **Match of the Day 2.** Mark Chapman reviews the latest Premier League action. **11.30** **Insert Name Here.** Katy Brand, Ed Gamble, Suzannah Lipscomb and Amol Rajan join captains Richard Osman and Josh Widdicombe to answer Sue Perkins' questions about famous people who share a name. (R) **12.00** Talking Pictures: Roger Moore. (R) **1.00** Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **2.00** Holby City. (R) **3.00** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

**6.00** CITV: Sooty. **6.10** Bottom Knockers Street. (R) **6.20** Bottom Knockers Street. (R) **6.35** Dino Dana. (R) **7.00** Mission Emplayable. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Ben 10. **8.10** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Tom and Jerry: Santa's Little Helpers. **9.00** Scrambled!: Wistful. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Best Walks with a View with Julia Bradbury. (R) **9.55** Countrywise Winter Wonderland. (R) **10.40** The Martin Lewis Money Show. (R) **11.10** Save Money: Good Food. (R) **11.40** How to Spend it Well at Christmas with Phillip Schofield. (R) **12.40** ITV News: Weather. **12.45** Film: Step Up. (2006) Romantic dance drama, with Channing Tatum and Jenna Dewan. **2.50** Midsomer Murders. (R) **4.45** Tipping Point. (R) **5.45** The Chase: Celebrity Special. **6.45** **The Chase: The Bloopers.** Bradley Walsh presents a compilation of outtakes from the quiz show, featuring regular chasers the Governess, the Beast, the Vixen, the Sinnerman and the Dark Destroyer. **7.40** **Regional Programme:** Weather. **7.50** **ITV News:** Weather. **8.00** **Film: The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug.** (2013) The party of dwarves and their hobbit ally continue the quest to reclaim their lost kingdom, journeying through the forest home of ancestral enemy the elves and finally facing the dragon that drove them from their home. Meanwhile, Gandalf the wizard investigates the rise of a mysterious dark power. Part two of Peter Jackson's fantasy adventure trilogy based on JRR Tolkien's novel, starring Martin Freeman, Ian McKellen, Richard Armitage and Orlando Bloom. **11.05** **ITV News:** Weather. **11.25** **Through the Christmas Keyhole.** Keith Lemon hosts a Christmas special of the game show, as celebrity panellists Shayne Ward, Kelly Brook and Johnny Vegas are asked to identify the homes of the rich and famous. (R) **12.15** Jackpot247. Viewers get the chance to participate in live interactive gaming from the comfort of their sofas, with a mix of roulette, craps and live! chat from the presenting team. **3.00** Tenable. Quiz, hosted by Warwick Davis. (R)

CHANNEL 4

**6.10** 3rd Rock from the Sun. (R) **6.35** 3rd Rock from the Sun. (R) **7.05** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Paul Hollywood: A Baker's Life. (R) **1.00** Jamie's Ultimate Christmas. (R) **2.05** The Simpsons. (R) **2.35** The Simpsons. (R) **3.05** Film: Jingle All the Way. (1996) Comedy, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger. **4.50** Born Silly. **5.20** Channel 4 News. **5.50** Film: Miracle on 34th Street. (1994) Christmas family drama remake, with Richard Attenborough. **8.00** **Coastal Railways with Julie Walters.** The actress travels from Cardigan Bay to Liverpool, visiting the heritage railway in Tywyn that was the inspiration for Thomas the Tank Engine and a community that is famous for knitting. She also paints a carriage in Boston Lodge, catches the famous Festiniog railway through Snowdonia, and visits Europe's fastest zip wire and largest pet cemetery. Last in the series. **9.00** **Inside Bentley: A Very British Motor Car.** Documentary going behind the scenes at the car company's plant in northwest England, as work commences on a new range of 4x4s. This is the first time cameras have had access to the plant, which is currently undergoing millions in new investment. The programme features the local people and master craftsmen working on the factory floor as well as visiting the world's most exclusive car showroom in Mayfair and the secretive department where customers can obtain the latest upgrades to their bespoke vehicle. **10.00** **Film: Die Hard.** (1988) A New York cop battles armed men who have taken over a Los Angeles skyscraper where his wife is working on Christmas Eve. Action thriller, starring Bruce Willis and Alan Rickman. **12.35** **Film: Mercury Rising.** (1998) An FBI agent shields an autistic child from government assassins after the boy cracks a supposedly unbreakable top-secret code. Thriller, starring Bruce Willis and Alec Baldwin. **2.25** **Film: Origins.** (2014) Drama, starring Michael Pitt. **4.10** Location, Location, Location. Revisiting house-hunters in Kent and Edinburgh. (R) **5.05** Extreme Cake Makers. (R) **5.35** Countdown. (R)

CHANNEL 5

**6.00** Milkshake!: Little Princess. **6.15** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **6.20** Poppy Cat. (R) **6.35** Whisper. (R) **6.40** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.45** Milkshake! Bopping About. (R) **6.50** Simon. (R) **6.55** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.10** Puffin Rock. **7.15** Milkshake! Bop Box. (R) **7.20** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.35** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.50** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.15** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.30** Nella the Princess Knight. (R) **8.50** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **9.00** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.10** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.30** Digby Dragon. (R) **9.45** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.55** Peppa Pig. (R) **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.35** Football on 5: The Championship. (R) **11.30** Football on 5: Goal Rush. (R) **12.00** Film: Season's Greetings. (2016) Festive comedy, starring Laura Bell Bundy. **1.50** Film: Twelve Trees of Christmas. (2013) Drama, starring Lindy Booth. **3.35** Film: Our First Christmas. (2008) Family drama, starring Julie Warner. **4.35** 5 News Update. **4.40** Film: Our First Christmas. (2008) Concluded. **5.20** 5 News Weekend. **5.25** Film: A Heavenly Christmas. (2016) Premiere. Festive romance, starring Kristin Davis. **7.10** **Film: Legally Blonde.** (2001) A dizzy teenager enrolls at Harvard to try to prove to her ex-boyfriend that she is not stupid, but finds herself out of her depth. Comedy, with Reese Witherspoon and Luke Wilson. **8.10** **5 News Update.** **8.15** **Film: Legally Blonde.** (2001) Concluded. **9.00** **Agatha Christie's Crooked House.** Adaptation of the mystery novel, starring Max Irons and Terence Stamp. The son of the assistant commissioner at Scotland Yard returns to London from Cairo following the end of the Second World War, only to discover his fiancée's grandfather has been murdered. He uses his father's connections to become involved in the investigation, only to discover nobody has an alibi but the woman he loves may have a motive. With Gillian Anderson and Glenn Close. **11.00** **Film: Sleepy Hollow.** (1999) A sceptical 18th-century detective takes on a headless horseman who decapitates his victims. Tim Burton's gothic horror, with Johnny Depp. **12.55** Criminals: Caught on Camera. (R) **1.15** SuperCasino. **3.10** My Crazy Christmas Obsession. (R)

DIGITAL

**BBC Four**  
**7.00** Only Connect **7.30** Great Continental Railway Journeys **8.00** Mrs Dickens' Family Christmas **9.00** The Mystery of Edwin Drood **11.00** The Real Star of Bethlehem: A Sky at Night Christmas Special **12.00** The Genius of Marie Curie - The Woman Who Lit Up the World **1.00** Roger Bannister: Everest on the Track **2.00** Timeshift: Mods, Rockers and Bank Holiday Mayhem  
**ITV2**  
**11.50** Take Me Out Celebrity Special **12.55** Mr Bean **2.00** Film: Jack Frost (1998) **3.00** FYI Daily **3.05** Film: Jack Frost (1998) **4.05** Catchphrase Christmas Special **5.05** Film: Happy Feet (2006) **6.05** FYI Daily **6.10** Film: Happy Feet (2006) **7.15** Film: Gravity (2013) **8.15** FYI Daily **8.20** Film: Gravity (2013) **9.00** Film: The Holiday (2006) **10.00** FYI Daily **10.05** Film: The Holiday (2006) **11.45** Family Guy **1.40** American Dad!  
**ITV3**  
**1.30** Film: Columbo: The Most Dangerous Match (1973) **3.10** Film: Columbo: Sex and the Married Detective (1989) **5.15** Film: Up Pompeii (1971) **6.20** FYI Daily **6.25** Film: Up Pompeii (1971) **6.55** Doc Martin **9.00** Tommy Cooper Forever **11.00** A Touch of Frost **1.05** The Knock  
**ITV4**  
**11.25** Film: Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure (1989) **12.30** FYI Daily **12.35** Film: Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure (1989) **1.10** Film: Red River (1948) **2.10** FYI Daily **2.15** Film: Red River (1948) **3.55** Film: Bend of the River (1952) **4.55** FYI Daily **5.00** Film: Bend of the River (1952) **5.55** British Superbike Championship Review 2017 **7.55** River Monsters **9.00** Film: Species II (1998) **10.05** FYI Daily **10.10** Film: Species II (1998) **10.55** Film: Gangs of New York (2002) **11.55** FYI Daily **12.00** Film: Gangs of New York (2002)  
**E4**  
**11.00** Made in Chelsea **12.00** Film: Catch That Kid (2004) **1.50** Rude(ish) Tube Shorts **2.00** The Goldbergs **3.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.00** Film: The Three Musketeers (2011) **10.10** Googlebox **12.20** The Inbetweeners **2.00** Rude Tube: All Things Weird and Wonderful **3.00** Googlebox **3.55** Holyoaks  
**Film4**  
**11.00** The Book of Life (2014) **1.00** First Daughter (2004) **3.20** The Train (1964) **6.05** Robin Hood (2010) **9.00** Thor **11.15** SuperCasino **3.10** My Crazy Christmas Obsession. (R) **1.05** Mindscape (2013) **3.10** Close

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42nd Street

New York City, 1933, and Peggy Sawyer, just off the bus from out-of-town hicksville, manages to miss the auditions for the dazzling new Broadway show but Peggy's impromptu dance routine is later spotted by the casting director, who decides to take a chance on her after all...

All the stops are pulled out as this classic tale of Broadway's Golden Age comes to London, directed and co-written by veteran Mark Bramble and featuring the showstoppers We're In The Money, Lullaby of Broadway, Shuffle Off To Buffalo, Dames, I Only Have Eyes For You and 42nd Street.

London Theatre Break

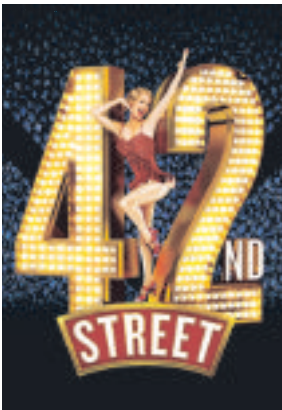
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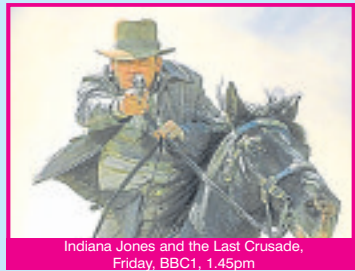


FILM CHOICES

**MONDAY**  
**Christmas Bucket List, Channel 5, 5.20pm**  
 Isobel plans a storybook Christmas with her boyfriend, including a snow-covered cottage and a carefully selected list of holiday traditions, but he goes Awol and a tempting new romance turns her life upside down. Comedy, starring Alicia Witt. (2016)

**TUESDAY**  
**A Prince for Christmas, Channel 5, 5.25pm**  
 In an effort to escape his upcoming arranged marriage, a European prince travels to America incognito over Christmas, where he meets a charming waitress. Festive romance, starring Viva Bianca and Kirk Barker. (2015)

**WEDNESDAY**  
**James and the Giant Peach, Channel 5, 12.25pm**  
 An unhappy orphan living with his cruel aunts discovers a gigantic peach growing in the garden. Venturing inside, he meets six friendly insects and together they embark on a magical journey. Animated and live-action fantasy, based on Roald Dahl's novel, starring Paul Terry, Joanna Lumley and Miriam Margolyes. (1996)



Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, Friday, BBC1, 1.45pm

**THURSDAY**  
**Wallace & Gromit in The Curse of the Were-Rabbit, BBC1, 3.35pm**  
 Inventor Wallace and his canine sidekick Gromit have set up a pest-control service, and are called in to stop rabbits overrunning a garden show. However, the pair are overwhelmed when a destructive giant bunny arrives on the scene, while an interfering aristocrat contrives to make matters worse. Nick Park's Oscar-winning animated adventure, with the voices of Peter Sallis and Ralph Fiennes. (2005)

**FRIDAY**  
**Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, BBC1, 1.45pm**  
 The intrepid archaeologist sets out to find his estranged father, who has gone missing while searching for the Holy Grail. Once reunited, the duo team up to finish the task and locate the sacred relic before the Nazis get their hands on it. Action adventure sequel, starring Harrison Ford. (1989)

# The Gentlemen are still in a League of their own

If there's one thing you're guaranteed when tuning into The League of Gentlemen it's trouble – and as Mark Gatiss, Steve Pemberton and Reece Shearsmith are back for three special editions this week, you can bet there'll be trouble aplenty in Royston Vasey.

If you haven't heard of the show, it focuses on some of the strangest characters ever to grace the small screen.

Take Edward and Tubbs, for example. They're a brother and sister living in "a local shop for local people" who hate strangers and bump them off at every opportunity, while Harvey and Val Denton are the relatives from Hell with a penchant for toads.

Then there's Barbara, the transsexual cab driver whose operation seems to have gone horribly wrong, and Pauline, a vindictive employment restart officer totally obsessed with pens.

But it's been a decade and a half since we last saw the boys all working together, in tandem with

their writing partner, Jeremy Dyson. They've decided to resurrect the town and its weird and wonderful inhabitants to celebrate the 20th anniversary of their first BBC show, a six-part radio broadcast entitled On the Town with the League of Gentlemen; its success led to the first TV series two years later.

"We are thrilled to bits to be returning to Royston Vasey in celebration of our 20 years at the BBC (with time off for bad behaviour)," say the boys. "We look forward to digging up the old characters - some of them literally - and seeing how life has treated them."

"It's been great fun to write these Specials, and we've saved money on the make-up budget by kindly growing ancient ourselves. Like the sign says: You'll Never Leave."

Gatiss, Shearsmith and Pemberton met while studying drama at Bretton Hall College in West Yorkshire, and struggled to make it as actors before teaming up with Gatiss' friend Dyson and devising a stage show inspired by

oddballs they had met, as well as their mutual love of classic British horror movies such as The Wicker Man, Don't Look Now and those made by Hammer.

After three TV series, a Christmas special, a film, stage show and live tours, the quartet decided to work on new projects. All three actors have worked constantly on a range of projects; Gatiss is perhaps best known for Doctor Who (he appears in this year's Christmas special) and Sherlock, while Pemberton and Shearsmith have appeared in a number of projects independently as well as together on Psychoville and Inside No 9.

Dyson has written books, been a script editor and co-created the West End hit Ghost Stories with Andy Nyman; a film version is heading our way soon.

Last year, Gatiss mentioned during an interview that perhaps when the League did come back together, they could do something with a Brexit theme, seeing as Britain had become a "local country for local people."



The League of Gentlemen, Monday, BBC2, 10pm

## BEST OF THE REST

**MONDAY**  
**Would I Lie to You? At Christmas BBC1, 9.30pm**  
 Rob Brydon hosts a festive edition of the comedy panel show in which the participants aim to hoodwink their opponents with absurd facts and plausible lies about themselves in a bid to secure a team victory. Joining team captains David Mitchell and Lee Mack for the Christmas fun are former Test Match Special commentator Henry Blofeld, Wiltless star Kerry Howard, broadcaster Reverend Richard Coles and BBC News presenter Clive Myrie. They all reveal amazing stories, but are they telling the truth, or making it all up?

**TUESDAY**  
**The Royal Variety Performance 2017 ITV, 7.30pm**  
 Miranda Hart hosts the annual event, this time from the London Palladium Theatre in the presence of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge. The line-up includes Alfie Boe, Michael Ball, Seal and Britain's Got Talent Winner Tokio Myers. Tom Allen and the cast of Benidorm are among the acts providing the laughs. Frasier veteran Kelsey Grammer also makes an appearance with the cast of stage hit Big Fish, and there will be a chance to see routines from musicals 42nd Street and Annie.

**WEDNESDAY**  
**Judi Dench's Secret Woodland BBC1, 8pm**  
 The name tree-hugger is often used a derogatory term aimed at those who care for the countryside. But after tuning into this documentary, you may get the impression that Judi Dench would be proud to be called such a thing. For years, she has had a deep love, respect and affection for trees, and now has a secret woodland – or private arboretum, if you prefer – at her Surrey home. It's an area she created with a fellow enthusiast, her late husband Michael Williams, and one she now tends to with her close companion, wildlife enthusiast David Mills. Filmed over the course of a year, the programme offers an insight into the impact that the changing seasons have on the area, while the Oscar-winning star learns more about how trees help the environment.

**THURSDAY**  
**Joanna & Jennifer: Absolutely Changers BBC2, 9pm**  
 Champagne was always the tipple of choice for Absolutely

Fabulous characters Patsy Stone and Edina Monsoon – and it seems it's a similar story off-screen for actresses Joanna Lumley and Jennifer Saunders, who like nothing better than sharing a glass of bubbly. Now, they're about to learn more about their favourite drink as they head to the Champagne region of North Eastern France to discover how it's made. Along the way, they visit family run vineyards, and join the seasonal workers who are dealing with this year's grape harvest. But the Ab Fab stars also discover a few things they didn't know about each other as they share a few anecdotes and stories from their lives. And that's definitely worth raising a glass too.

**FRIDAY**  
**Celebrity 5 Go in Search of Santa Claus Channel 5, 8.30pm**  
 You can run but you can't hide from celebrity travelogues



Al Murray's Make Christmas Great Again, Friday, ITV, 9pm

these days. But while some have featured stars you might not expect to pop up on docusoaps – such as Julie Walters, Timothy West, Prunella Scales and Miriam Margolyes – there are others you've kind of come to expect to take part. Some of them feature in this 90-minute documentary. Actors Christopher Biggins and Sue Holderness, comedian Joe Pasquale, musician-turned-presenter Reverend Richard Coles and cook Rustie Lee are taking an epic trip into the Arctic Circle to explore Lapland, the official home of Santa Claus. They stay in traditional cabins and lodges, indulge in the 'delights' of saunas, river dipping and whipping with hot birch twigs while on the trail of the big man with the beard.

**Al Murray's Make Christmas Great Again ITV, 9pm**  
 It's the last Friday before Christmas (known in some circles as Black or Mad Friday), which means that a lot of people will be heading to the pub to celebrate. However, if you don't fancy facing hordes of people with a little too much festive spirit, the good news is that Al Murray's Pub Landlord is back to host his own televised lock-in at The Reindeer's Head. Backed by his house band, The Remoans, he'll be leading festive sing-songs on numbers including You Can't Even Say Christmas Any More.

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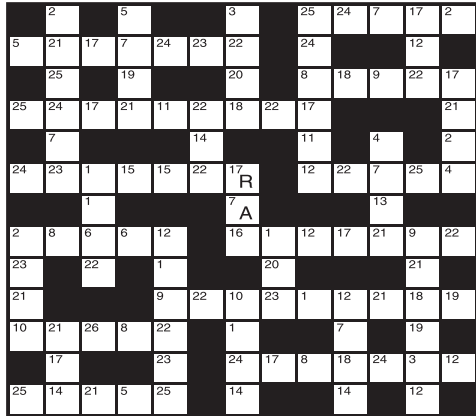


## BRAIN GYM

No.460

## Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	T	2	A	3	Q	4	Z	5	U	6	Y	7	V	8	W	9	P	10	G	11	F	12	X	13	I
14	K	15	B	16	J	17	S	18	N	19	R	20	H	21	E	22	D	23	C	24	O	25	L	26	M

1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

## Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

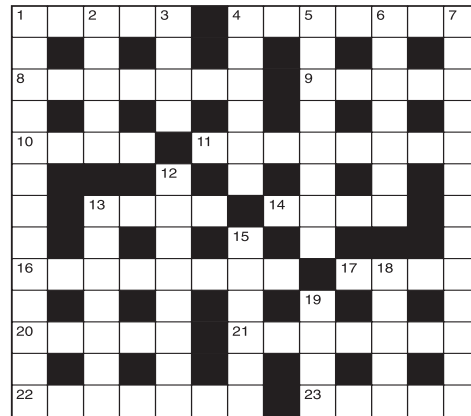
## Cryptic Clues:

## Across

- A game to settle the ashes? (5)
- Film with a good finish (7)
- In my view, a vegetable with very good stuffing (7)
- Best substitute for shaving soap (5)
- The last of the wine (4)
- Keep for a lock (8)
- It's bound to secure advance accommodation (4)
- Thrash in the return game (4)
- Snuggled into a new quilt, managed to remain undisturbed (8)
- A race to make you sweat (4)
- Keep out of sight after a number make complaints (5)
- Stop and go after amber changes (7)
- The girl looks different, having slimmed (7)
- It's the herb season, we hear (5)

## Down

- New Liberal M.P. to put up a bill inside? Doubtful (13)
- A weapon used daily by most people (5)
- Deceiver stood up to use abusive language (4)
- A number finish with an alternative seller (6)
- Public deliveries (8)
- Titanic destroyer (7)
- It's said to be the best place to be (4,5,4)
- A number on a search are winning (8)
- Attitude taken by a navigator (7)
- Passenger-ship has a slender look (6)
- Is in good time but nearly loses a point (5)
- Come up against an objection (4)



## Quick Clues:

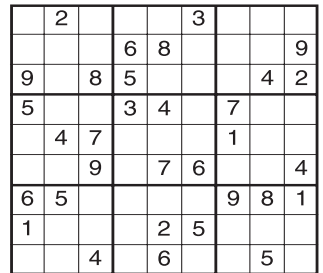
## Across

- Emulate (5)
- Amuses (7)
- Idiotic (7)
- Shelf (5)
- Inactive (4)
- A volcano (4)
- Warmth (4)
- Records (8)
- Separate (4)
- Angry (5)
- Raise (7)
- Inherent (7)
- Clothe (5)

## Down

- Freezing (13)
- Essential (5)
- Booby (4)
- Abandon (6)
- Traduced (8)
- Fortification (7)
- Resolution (13)
- Contrive (8)
- Charm (7)
- Disclose (6)
- Lessen (5)
- Despatch (4)

## Sudoku



Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

## LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS &gt;

1	4	3	6	2	7	8	9	5
5	2	6	4	9	8	3	7	1
7	9	8	1	3	5	4	6	2
4	8	2	5	6	1	9	3	7
3	7	1	9	8	4	2	5	6
8	6	7	3	1	2	5	4	9
9	1	4	8	5	6	7	2	3
2	3	5	7	4	9	6	1	8

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:  
CRYPTIC - Across: 3 Billiards; 8 Uses; 9 Capricorn; 10 Prison; 11 Horse; 14 Charm; 15 Trim; 16 Amass; 18 Owed; 20 Track; 21 Solid; 24 Tender; 25 Frightful; 26 Coin; 27 Murderess. Down: 1 Suspicion; 2 Meditates; 4 Iran; 5 Largo; 6 Accost; 7 Dora; 9 Comma; 11 Hoard; 12 Errand boy; 13 Smoke ring; 17 Steel; 19 Dogged; 22 Inter; 23 Frau; 24 Tugs.  
QUICK - Across: 3 Promenade; 8 Etch; 9 Attribute; 10 Elapse; 11 Deal; 14 Those; 15 Each; 16 Realm; 18 Roam; 20 Enter; 21 Loyal; 24 Beacon; 25 Palatable; 26 Bass; 27 Personnel. Down: 1 Sedentary; 2 Octagonal; 4 Rite; 5 Merge; 6 Nublie; 7 Duty; 9 Aster; 11 Drawl; 12 Tactician; 13 Sharpness; 17 Melee; 19 Morass; 22 Again; 23 Vase; 24 Blue.

## Quiz

- Which English king made the Homburg fashionable?
- As which bird is the Holy Spirit usually depicted?
- To which mountain range does Ben Nevis belong?
- Which war was ended by the Treaty of Paris in 1856?
- What is a monkey puzzle?
- What was Walter Lantz's most famous flying cartoon creation?
- Which singer-songwriter was born Robert Zimmerman?
- In which city is the Bridge of Brotherhood and Unity?
- Who wrote The Doll's House?
- What is the brightest star in the constellation Lyra?

## Last week's solutions:

- Quiz: 1 Carmen; 2 Arthur Miller; 3 New York; 4 Force; 5 Costa Rica; 6 Id est; 7 Tarragon; 8 Montana; 9 Dolphin; 10 Socrates.

## Niner: HARMONIES

## Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

17235  
31175678  
494878

gives a criminal,  
gives a second criminal,  
gives a money lender.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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# Mermaid meal went swimmingly

IT'S long been THE place to go. When we first moved to the area – three decades ago – we would often drive past The Mermaid at Compton and it was very rare that the car park was not full.

Looking at the pub, on the Bridgnorth Road, it is hard not to be attracted to it. In the summer months the vast covering of the beautiful wisteria is quite stunning.

But the inside is just as much a delight.

The spacious car park and convenient location, perfectly placed for the West Midlands, Staffordshire and Shropshire area, with a canopy covered eating area outside for those warmer months.

But no fear now that the cold, dreary weather is upon us, step inside and the decor is just as inviting. It has a warm comfortable feel matched by the service and attentiveness of the staff.

We popped in recently on a Saturday night and were lucky to get a table because its popularity has spread far and wide.

## IMPRESSIVE

Nestled in a corner, we tucked into a delightful three-course meal.

As there were four of us we chose one sharer – my daughter and I tucked into the Box Baked Camembert while the two men had the Duo of Pate and the Salt and Pepper Calamari and, needless to say, I had a little taster of each others.

Well you have to try as many dishes as possible, it's part of the job!

What was particularly impressive was that before we ordered our son-in-law explained to the waitress that he was lactose intolerant, at which she disappeared to the kitchen and returned with a large blue file.

In it were the ingredients of all the dishes of the menu

The Mermaid – just as attractive inside



Welcoming – General manager Chris Callow, with assistant manager Lizzie Johnston (right) and Emma Thomas

so there was no danger of him choosing something that would not suit him. No fuss, just reassurance that he could make the right choices.

For mains I went for my favourite, the Hunter's Chicken and it appears I am not alone as it is the pub's most popular dish, always on the menu no matter what the season.

My husband as usual went for the Rump Steak and my daughter for the Spicy Diablo pizza, it was so huge that she took some home to enjoy the next day. Having looking through the ingredients Duncan settled on the

Fish and Chips. All very good portions and beautifully served and just enough room for pudding.

Although fairly full by then, three of us were ready to tuck in.

My husband is not really a sweets man but when he saw what was on offer he changed his mind and went for the Melba Mallow Mess.

They do a nice coffee and mini pudding for £4.95 pud which is a great idea but my daughter and I teamed up again with the sharing Pudding Tasting Platter.

Well we like to share but I think I had the lion's share.

I finished mine off with a liqueur coffee – my pregnant daughter had already offered to drive. Be rude to say no.

So popular the Mermaid Christmas dinner menu is already sold out but there are still limited places for the Boxing Day meal (two courses £17.95, three courses £20.95. Call 01902 764896.

Or go to reservations opentable.co.uk

I drive past this Vintage Inn pub every day on my way to work and have always commented on how welcoming it looks. How right I was.

SUE ATTWATER

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# Major changes make Mazda2 a more dynamic, refined drive

By John Griffiths

**Mazda's most affordable model – a competitor for the likes of the top-selling Ford Fiesta and Vauxhall Corsa – has undergone a transformation.**

Not that you'll be able to see too much difference in the new Mazda2 (unless you go for the new flagship, the GT Sport) but there are major improvements under the skin, many shared with its more expensive stablemate the CX-3. While these things are mostly under the skin, they have transformed the Mazda2, making it a more dynamic yet more refined drive.

The 2 was only launched two years ago, but so fierce is the competition in the supermini sector that Mazda was clearly keen to get the results of its research and development into the car as soon as possible. It's a must since the 2 is a bigger seller for Mazda (10,000 a year in the UK).

Mazda2 prices start from a competitive £12,695 up to £16,995 for the GT Sport, which comes with some subtle, sports body styling and, of course, the highest equipment levels in the range.

All area powered by a 1.5 litre petrol engine, rated at either 75, 90 (currently the most popular) or in the case of the GT Sport 115Ps of power. An extra 25Ps makes a difference, of course, but the GT Sport is more in the 'warm' than 'hot' hatchback range. It offers a significant increase in performance (0 to 62mph in 8.7 seconds) for a relatively small penalty in fuel economy and emissions – for many a happy compromise given today's political, financial and environmental considerations.



**A new steering wheel is fitted with finger controls**

Its official fuel average is 56.5mpg, compared to 60.1mpg for the entry-level 75Ps. In a real world test, mid to high 40s ought to be possible for most drivers.

There are many more advantages to the more powerful motor than simply who's quickest off the mark. It offers a more relaxed, quieter drive, pulls better when loaded, and is more ready to get up and go when an overtaking opportunity presents itself.

But the GT Sport tag is also justified by the raft of internal improvements which has helped turn an already good handling supermini into one of the best in class.

Front and rear damper settings, together with new anti-roll bar bushes, have improved the car's ride and reduced body roll while the power steering has been recalibrated and all versions also get Mazda's G-Vectoring Control – a feature usually seen on much more expensive cars.

The overall result makes the Mazda2 feel like a much more driver-focussed car, with a sharp and accurate turn in and precise tracking through bends. Road-holding is confidence inspiring, and it's been achieved at the same time as a particularly refined ride quality for a car in this class.

Additional soundproofing and an upgraded interior had added to that sense of refined motoring: it feels 'grown up' like a more expensive car.

There's extra equipment across the range including LED foglights, electric folding mirrors and passenger seat height adjustment, while higher spec versions also get new 16-inch alloys. The 90Ps GT and the flagship GT Sport also get LED headlights and daylight running lights, a contrasting black rear spoiler, while inside there are leather seats, climate control, a colour head-up display and, on the GT Sport, a reversing camera.

All apart from entry-level models come with a central colour touch screen controller for audio, navigation, and connectivity functions. A new steering wheel is fitted with thumb/finger controls systems.

There are new interior fabrics and trims, too, for the comfort of up to four adults (five at a push) with plenty of head and legroom for most. Boot space is an average 280 litres, with all the seats in use.

It's been a fairly extensive midlife upgrade for the Mazda2, majoring on comfort and enhancing its already complimented dynamic ability. Its competitively priced, too, which is another point in its favour in such a hard-fought sector of the market.



**Biggest improvements come under the skin**

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14 Ford Focus 1.6 TDCi Zetec Navigator EConetic Black 98k	<b>£6,295</b>
11 Ford Focus Diesel 1.6 TDCi 115 Titanium Blue 62k	<b>£6,495</b>
60 Ford Focus Hatchback 1.6 Zetec Silver 60k	<b>£4,495</b>
64 Ford Grand C-max Diesel 1.6 TDCi Zetec Blue 41k	<b>£9,995</b>
64 Ford Grand C-max Diesel 1.6 TDCi Zetec Brown 17k	<b>£10,995</b>
64 Ford S-max 1.6 TDCi Zetec [Start Stop] Silver 37k	<b>£11,295</b>
64 Ford S-max Diesel Estate 2.0 TDCi 163 Titanium Blue 33k	<b>£14,495</b>
Kia	
14 Kia Rio Hatchback Special Editions 1.25 VR7 3dr White 14k	<b>£6,495</b>
14 Kia Sportage Diesel Estate 1.7 CRDi ISG 1 Black 33k	<b>£10,495</b>
64 Kia Sportage Diesel Estate 1.7 CRDi ISG 1 White 25k	<b>£11,695</b>
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64 Peugeot 5008 Diesel Estate 1.6 e-HDi Allure EGC Grey 37k	<b>£10,995</b>
64 Peugeot 5008 Diesel Estate 1.6 HDi Allure Blue 28k	<b>£10,995</b>

#### Renault

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64 Renault Clio Diesel 1.5 dCi 90 Dynam MediaNav Energy Red 48k	<b>£7,495</b>
09 Renault Grand Modus 1.5 dCi 86 Dynamique QS5 Beige Auto 49k	<b>£3,495</b>
14 Renault Scenic 1.5 dCi Dynamique TomTom Energy Beige 16k	<b>£9,495</b>

#### Vauxhall

60 Vauxhall Astra Hatchback 1.6i 16V SE Auto Grey 63k	<b>£5,495</b>
64 Vauxhall Astra Sports Tourer 2.0 CDTi 16V Elite Brown 39k	<b>£7,995</b>
64 Vauxhall Insignia Sports Tourer 2.0 CDTi Design Blue 29k	<b>£9,995</b>
61 Vauxhall Meriva Estate 1.4T 16V [140] SE White 40k	<b>£5,295</b>
64 Vauxhall Mokka Diesel 1.7 CDTi SE 5dr Auto Black 30k	<b>£10,995</b>
64 Vauxhall Mokka Hatchback 1.4T Tech Line Auto Red 43k	<b>£10,995</b>
61 Vauxhall Zafira 1.7 CDTi ecoFLEX Exclusiv [125] Grey 109k	<b>£3,995</b>
64 Vauxhall Zafira Diesel Tourer 2.0 CDTi SE Brown 18k	<b>£10,995</b>

#### Volkswagen

64 Volkswagen Golf Cabriolet 1.6 TDI BlueMotion Tech SE Blue 49k	<b>£10,495</b>
64 Volkswagen Golf Diesel Hatch 1.6 TDI 105 Match Blue 36k	<b>£10,495</b>
64 Volkswagen Polo Hatchback 1.0 Black 47k	<b>£7,495</b>

#### Others

07 Audi A4 Cabriolet 1.8T 2dr Grey 72k	<b>£3,995</b>
64 Mercedes-benz B Class B180 CDI Sport Black 36k	<b>£12,495</b>
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# How to improve a car's performance by 70%

The effectiveness consultancy Benchmarking recently analysed what happens when companies include press advertising in their media mix.

They looked at more than 500 econometric models, covering a five-year period and, as the table here shows, they found that adding newspapers dramatically increases the effectiveness of other media.

In the automotive sector they reviewed companies that ranged from the big spending German gothiaths of the industry to medium sized independent carmakers.

And they discovered that by adding newspaper advertising to their campaigns, they cranked up their effectiveness by over 70%.

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Please see our customer reviews  
on either Homepro or Which

“Energy efficient windows  
that won't cost the earth”  
Station Street, Cradley Heath, B64 6AJ

Est 1987 **01384 566100**  
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Warranted certifies FENSA

## Electricians

### BRADLEY ELECTRICAL & MAINTENANCE

Est 1987

All electrical work undertaken  
Fully qualified & insured  
Installation Condition Reports

No job too small

★ **FREE ESTIMATES** ★

Electrical Safety  
Register

ELCSA + NECA

Call Paul 01384 344589 or  
07812 435833  
[www.bradleyelectrical.net](http://www.bradleyelectrical.net)

## Home Improvements

### Serenity HOME IMPROVEMENTS

- Extensions • New Build
- Electrical • Plumbing
- Plastering • Carpentry
- Brickwork
- Windows/Doors
- Tiling • Roofing

**Fully qualified tradesmen  
ALL WORK GUARANTEED**

One call does it all  
**01384 279997**

[www.serenitykitchensbathrooms.co.uk](http://www.serenitykitchensbathrooms.co.uk)

## Builders

### C ETHERIDGE BUILDING SERVICES

- Extensions
- Alterations
- Roofing
- Landscaping
- Block paving
- General property maintenance.

Over 35yrs  
experience  
For a FREE quote call Chris  
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07989 738732

## Carpet Cleaning

### Clean Carpets Dudley

Carpets & Upholstery  
Fresh, Hygienic  
& Dry in 1 Hour

**WINTER OFFERS  
AVAILABLE**

Call Steven on  
01384 848496 or 07468 031133  
[www.clean-carpets-dudley.co.uk](http://www.clean-carpets-dudley.co.uk)

## Driveways

### ACE PAVING SERVICES LTD

- City and Guilds Streetworks Approved
- Tarmac • Concrete Imprint • Block Paving and Patios • Landscaping
- Streetworks • Curb dropping • Turfing • Fencing and Decking
- Power Washing • 5 year guarantee FREE estimate • 15 years experience
- Fully insured • Resinbond Drives.

01384 847115 | 0121 7692193 | 07448031419

Web: [www.acepavingsservicesltd.co.uk](http://www.acepavingsservicesltd.co.uk)  
Email: [acepavingsservices@outlook.com](mailto:acepavingsservices@outlook.com)  
Cradley Enterprise Centre, Maypole Fields,  
Halesowen B63 2QB

### CT DRIVEWAYS

**FOR ALL YOUR SURFACING &  
TARMAC WORK**

- Paving and Driveways
- Block Bricks and Tarmac Repairs
- New Drives
- Forecourts
- Car Parks
- Trading Estates

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Where reputation matters

For all enquiries please call

Tel: 01384 270740 Mobile: 07587 954073  
email: [ctdriveways@mail.com](mailto:ctdriveways@mail.com)  
website: [www.ct-driveways.co.uk](http://www.ct-driveways.co.uk)

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### Fencing & Gates

**All Garden Work Undertaken**

- Slabbing • Block Paving • Tree Felling
- Turfing • Garden Clearance
- NO JOB TOO SMALL**

Manufacturers of all Concrete Products  
eg. Concrete Posts, Gravel Boards

All work guaranteed Insurance work undertaken  
Over 15 years experience (Public liability covered)

Call Steve on  
**01384 242891 or 07970 300586**

## Gutter Cleaning

### Gutter Cleaning

We also clean:  
UPVC, Fascias, Conservatories  
and Solar Panels  
We also Repair and Maintain

**AVOID COSTLY REPAIR BILLS**

We use the latest equipment, and will clear any  
blockages or leaves build up from your gutters...

Call Today 07541-928-598

**SPECIAL  
OFFER  
£40**  
PER PROPERTY

## Gardening

### ROWAN TREE & GARDEN SERVICES LTD

- \*Tree Surgeon Specialist \*Stump Grinding/Root Removal
- \*Hedges Pruned/Shaped \*Jungles Cleared/Full Landscapes
- \*Fencing \*Turfing \*Concreting \*Driveways & Patios
- \*Plus Much More Call Now For a No Obligation Quotation

**WWW.ROWANGROUP.CO.UK**

**01384 213644 or 07733 226568**

AGE CONCERN & Local Authority Contractor, N.P.T.C. qualified,  
Public Liability Insurance (£5 million) All staff C.R.B. Certified

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### SEDGLEY TREE CARE

Professional Tree Surgeon  
All aspects of tree work undertaken

- CONTRACT TREE CLIMBER
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- CROWN REDUCTION
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- HEDGE TRIMMING
- GARDEN CLEARANCES
- ALL WASTE REMOVED  
NPTC QUALIFIED

**07746813358 or  
01902 659692  
FOR A FREE QUOTE**

**To advertise your business and reach more than 56,000 potential customers...**

**1**

Call us on...  
**01384 399901**

**2**

E-mail us at...  
[sue.jones@expressandstar.co.uk](mailto:sue.jones@expressandstar.co.uk)

**3**

Post to...  
Sue Jones, Stourbridge Chronicle  
3 Market Street, Stourbridge DY8 1AB



# Local Specialists



roofing

Plastering

## Roofing & Fascias

Est 2001

### Quality

- uPVC Fascias
- Soffits
- Guttering
- Cladding

- All aspects of roofing
- New roofs/repairs
- Flat roofs
- Tiling/slatting

- Dry verges
- Approved fibre glass installer

Wishing all our Customers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

**Also**

**CONCRETE GUTTERING**

Specialist removal  
Replacing with  
Modern low maintenance  
Upvc Fascias and Soffits

**All work guaranteed with HomePro Insurance**

Registered with

Membership No. 554518

**No Free Gimmicks Family Business**

**Local References if required**

**Giving homeowners peace of mind**

**ALWAYS FREE ADVICE AND QUOTATION**

**Freephone 0800 799 9413**

**Mob: 07906 724736**

**to speak to Mark**

123 Amblecote Road, Brierley Hill,  
West Midlands DY5 2YD

## CRB PLASTERING

**Services we offer**

- ✓ Skimming
- ✓ Dry Lining
- ✓ Boarding
- ✓ Wet Plastering
- ✓ Coving

**NO JOB TOO SMALL**

Call or text Chris for a quote or advice

**07837730208**

facebook

## G+T Plastering Services

All areas covered  
A Smooth Efficient Service

**07856 140630**

**01384 838 646**

GandTplasteringservices@outlook.com

Find us on Facebook 'G+T Plastering Services'

## S Harris Plastering

All aspects of Plastering:

- Boarding • Dry Lining
- Skimming • Coving

*Professional high quality workmanship*

**Call Steve for a free Quote**

**07853 257 230**

Plumbing & Heating

## KEN PERRY

PLUMBING & HEATING ENGINEER

Gas Fitting, Boiler Servicing  
and Immersion Heaters,  
Multi Point Water Heaters,  
Landlord's Gas Certificates,  
Boilers changed

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Gas Safe Registered

**STOURBRIDGE 392284**

**SELL IT FAST  
SELL IT LOCAL**

**01902 317878**



**ClassifiedAds**

## ROOFING SERVICES

*One of the Leading Roofing Companies*

**No Job too Small, No Job too Big**

- Gutters Cleaned From £15
- Small Repairs From £15
- Pointing Work From £15

**WILL BEAT ANY GENUINE QUOTE**

**SPECIAL OFFER on EPDM Rubberised Roofing**

on all UPVC Fascias, Gutters, New Roofs/Slate Tile & Felt and Garage Roofs.

- Rubberised flat roofing
- Flat roof specialist
- Insurance work undertaken
- Est 25 years
- Discounted for OAPs
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**FREE QUOTES AVAILABLE**

**Home: 01384 872276**

**Mobile: 07584 081228**

## ELITE PLASTICS

- Fascias • Soffits • Dry Verge
- Pointing • Gutter Cleaning And Repair

**Premium Products Expertly Fitted With Full Manufacture Guarantee.**

**For A Free Quote call**

**01384 468831 / 07985 575865**

[www.eliteplasticsupvc.co.uk](http://www.eliteplasticsupvc.co.uk)

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**CALL US NOW FOR A FREE QUOTE**

Skip Hire

## MT SKIPS & GRAB HIRE

**Save £££s**

All size skips and all areas covered  
Same day delivery faster than  
A phone call!!!

Open 7 days a week

**SCRAP CARS REMOVED FOR FREE**

**07920 88 57 74 or 01384 24 09 56**

## Local Specialists

**Our Specialist Section offers you a wide range of local businesses and tradesman to deal with your needs and requirements.**

Most ads are legal, decent, honest and truthful.

In 2016, the ASA removed 4,824 that weren't.

To advertise your business and reach more than 56,000 potential customers...

**1**

Call us on...  
**01384 399901**

**2**

E-mail us at...  
[sue.jones@expressandstar.co.uk](mailto:sue.jones@expressandstar.co.uk)

**3**

Post to...  
Sue Jones, Stourbridge Chronicle  
3 Market Street, Stourbridge DY8 1AB



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## Free Ads

**IT'S FREE IT'S EASY**

For items up to **£250**

**VISIT:**

[bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk](http://bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk)

Simply press the free ad icon.  
Sorry, no pets, guns or livestock.  
Private advertisers only.

## Place a paid for advert

### By Phone 01902 317878

8.30am - 5.30pm Mon - Fri.  
Closed Sat/Sun and Bank Holidays

### Online [bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk](http://bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk)

### In person

At your local Express & Star Office.  
Cancel/amend, call before 3.00pm  
Monday - Friday for the next day's  
advertisement or also before 3.00pm  
Friday for Monday's advertisement.

## 1 Family

### Clothing - Womens

**TED BAKER** - hand bag, black, as new, still has tags, never used, cost £109, sell £70 ono. 07956 007587. Can send photo.

### Elderly & Disabled

**MOBILITY SCOOTERS WANTED**. Any condition working or not. Call 07967 003600.

**WREKIN STAIRLIFTS** reconditioned lifts from £799. New available. 01952 405397/07897 273617

## 2 Leisure Time

### Caravans Wanted

**CARAVAN WANTED**. Can collect asap. Caravan wanted. Call me on 07717090817

**LET US SELL YOUR CARAVAN**. Motorhome for you and get the best possible price. Severn Valley Leisure, DY8 4HP. 01384 390183

### Fishing

**CARP FISHING TACKLE** Full set, too much too list. Please ring for list £650 no offers. 07398 861529.

### Caravan Sales

**A CHOICE OF CARAVANS FOR SALE** from £1995 to £6995, accessory shop, service, repairs, storage. Severn Valley Leisure, Stourbridge, DY8 4HP. 01384 390183. [www.severnvalleyleisure.com](http://www.severnvalleyleisure.com)

### Travel Abroad

**READERS ARE REMINDED** to check with any Advertiser that their holiday costs are fully covered by a recognised bonding or insurance scheme.

### Sports & Leisure

**GOLF CLUBS** Irons, woods, putter and sand wedge, complete with bag. £60 ono. 07707 333033.

## Free Ads

**IT'S FREE, IT'S EASY**  
For items upto £250.  
Online at  
[bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk](http://bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk)

### Antique Fairs

**ANTIQUE & COLLECTORS FAIR** Every month, Codsall Village Hall, Sunday 17th December 9am-3pm. Call Brian: 07923 538178.

**★ ANTIQUE/ COLLECTORS VINTAGE FAIR ★**  
CORNHALL, HAGLEY STREET, HALESOWEN, B63 3AT  
**FRIDAY DECEMBER 15TH**  
**FRIDAY JANUARY 12TH**  
8.30AM-3PM 07783680627 ★

### Book Fair

**BOOK FAIR** Kinver Community Centre, DY7 6ER, inc postcards. **Sunday 17th December**. Est 1979. Waverley. Also Bromsgrove Friday, Dec 29 and Jan 7. Next Antique Fair Dec 3rd. Home made refreshments. Call 0121 550 4361.

## 3 Home & Services

### Antiques

**LONG CASE** clock, art deco, dark wood, £500. 07526 684894.

### Furniture

**ARMCHAIR** fully reclining, tan sued leather, all unused, cost over £500, accept £165. 07787 636984. Private sale.

**PINE DRESSING TABLE** 4ft 6 long, with mirror, 8 drawers. Buyer collects. £40. 01902 676559.

**THERAPOSTURE ADJUSTABLE BED** 3ft wide shallow divan. Cream damask headboard. Medium Reflex mattress, waterproof cover. Used once, as new. £450. 07772 182696.

**TWO, TWO SEATER** settees, excellent condition. £50. 07906 313295.

### Household Appliances

**MORSO SQUIRREL 1430** Clean-heat multifuel stove, excellent condition, as new fire bricks. Stainless boiler also for sale. £450. 07772 095031.

### In Your Garden

**GREENHOUSE** 8ft x 6ft, toughened glass, includes staging, buyer to dismantle and collect. £400. 07398 861529.

### Items For Sale

**ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDED** That the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

**ITEMS FOR SALE**  
Mini Moto Motorbike £50.  
Four Builders Trestles £40  
Pipe bender Rothenberger £30  
Mitre guillotine £25.  
01384 635233/07895 141564.

**HAVE YOU CHECKED** your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

### Items Wanted

#### A BEST CASH PRICE

**FOR ALL RAILWAY COLLECTIONS**  
Any gauge or age  
Hornby/Bachmann/Bowmans/Roundhouse/Graham/Farsh/any live steam. Also Die Cast, Corgi, Dinky, Spot On.  
01384 836219/07891 713547  
thetrainmaster67@hotmail.com

## WANTED

**ALL MILLITARIA ITEMS FROM WARS WANTED BY COLLECTOR**  
Swords, medals, helmets etc, single or full items.  
German, Japanese, British.  
Will collect.  
Very good prices paid  
07511 500337.

**COINS, MEDALS, BANK NOTES** Wanted by private collector. Telephone 01902 676540.  
**READERS ARE ADVISED** to carefully consider all of their options before agreeing to the sale of any of their items.

**AUTO MEMORABILIA WANTED**  
SHELL, ESSO, CASTROL ETC  
ALSO  
GARAGE CLEARANCES  
Old Enamel Signs,  
Petrol Cans,  
Old Jugs,  
Bikes and Motorbikes.  
Anything old.  
**\*\* TOP PRICES PAID \*\***  
01384 836219/07891 713547

## WANTED

**VINTAGE TAMIYA REMOTE CONTROL MODELS**  
Also any old radio controlled models in any condition, Mardave, Kyocho, Traxxas, HPI Team Associated, Schumacher  
Big or small collections bought.  
07568 585075 or  
0121 532 2544.

### Loans

**READERS ARE REMINDED** that they may require professional advice before entering into obligations.

## t.v. / home entertainment

### Service

**AERIAL AND TV SPECIALIST**  
Any TV Repairs. Digital aerials, sky, CCTV cameras, TV wall mounts and TV set ups. 07850 330251.

## specialists at your service

### Aerials

**AA DIGITAL AERIALS**  
12 years experience.  
**AERIALS FITTED FROM £79.99**  
01902 858191 • 01384 429166  
01543 439095 • 01922 716029

**A AERIAL AND SKY SPECIALIST**  
Digital aerials, CCTV cameras, TV wall mount fitted. 07850 330251.

## CLASSIFIEDS BOOSTS BUSINESS!



"I am very pleased with the response I get from my Classified Advertising Contract"

Steve - AA Digital Aerials

For great business results call  
**01902 319 191**

**ClassifiedAds**  
Brought to you by Express & Star

**Electricians**

**Express & Star**

**ELECTRICIANS!**

**CLAIM YOUR FREE ADVERT**  
(T&Cs Apply)

**Call Claire Smith: 01902 319661**  
[claire.smith@expressandstar.co.uk](mailto:claire.smith@expressandstar.co.uk)

### Alarms/Security

**PREMIER ALARMS**  
Supplied and Fitted £249  
Servicing and Repairs  
12 Months Warranty  
All areas covered  
All quotes beaten!  
**Call: 0121 601 9791**

### Carpet & Upholstery Cleaning

**A BRILL CLEAN FOR YOUR CARPETS & SUITES**  
Special offers. Now / Dec OAP discounts.  
**Call Steve on 07496 922324**

### Electrical Services

**STEVE JONES ELECTRICAL**  
Rewires/sockets/fuse boards etc. All domestic and commercial work. 07786 85977/01902 846167.

### Fencing

## CLASSIFIEDS BOOSTS BUSINESS!



"I am extremely happy with the service I get from my Express & Star Classified Sales Representatives and would recommend them to anyone! They have done a very professional job with my website so I get online enquiries as well now."

Michael - Portway Fencing

For great business results call  
**01902 319 191**

**ClassifiedAds**  
Brought to you by Express & Star

### Gas Fitting

**READERS ARE ADVISED** To check that anyone carrying out any Gas work is Gas Safe Registered. It is an offence under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 to carry out gas work in the UK without being on the Gas Safe Register.

### House Clearances

**A ABSOLUTE BEST** cash price paid for house clearances and bereavements. Also removals undertaken. 07852 172641 / 07710 360327

**ABSOLUTELY ANYTHING CLEARED FULL OR PART, GARAGES AND SHEDS RUBBISH REMOVED WASTE LICENCE**  
01384 486456 / 07711661135

### Painters/Decorators

**LOVE 2 WALLPAPER**  
Reliable & Friendly, Professional Female Painters & Decorators. Attention to detail, competitive prices. For the Perfect Finish with minimum hassle. Plastering & Coving Work Undertaken  
01384 287577 or 07812 484194  
[www.love-2-wallpaper.co.uk](http://www.love-2-wallpaper.co.uk)

### Removals

**CALL DEAN NOW:** For all your Removal needs. 07429 453209/ 01902 830870 / 01384 940260.

**CALL IAN.** Man with a large van. No job too small, no distance too far. 07973 628534, 01902 891535.

### Removals

**KT HOUSE REMOVALS**  
12 years experience.  
SINGLE ITEMS TO FULL LOADS. LOCAL OR DISTANCE. FULLY INSURED.  
Free Quotes - Call Ric on:  
**07771 727119**

## KINGSWINFORD REMOVALS AND HOUSE CLEARANCES

We move anything. Professional service, 45 years' experience, DFS approved and we take the stress away.  
**Please call: 07966 281957**

### Roofing

**MG ROOFING** Flat roofs, tiling, roof repairs, fascias and gutters. Call 01902 238989 / 07580 465449.

### Rubbish Removal

**LETS TALK RUBBISH** No Skips Needed, Load/Remove any Waste, House Clearance. 07969 628382

### Skip Hire

**BIG JOHN MOVES RUBBISH!** No Skips, we load, fast friendly service, 25 Lister Rd, Dudley DY2 6JR, Est 40 years, 01384 232359.

## 4 Pets & Animals

### Equestrian Corner

**ALL READERS** are advised to check if Horses, Donkeys or Ponies have the required Passport information.

### Guns & Dogs

**NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS** Advertisers must ensure that they meet all necessary legal requirements for owning and using guns.

### Pets Corner

### NOTICE TO READERS

Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:

1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with it's Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree. Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

**BICHON FRISE** puppies, boys, ready Dec 15, flead, wormed, chipped. £550. 07776 312117.

### CHRISTMAS TREE STAR APPEAL

Have you got or did have a much loved pet to share your Christmas with, if so would you like to help our rescue dogs this Christmas by putting a star on our tree.

We will put his / her name on the star for small sum of £2. All donations will help our rescue dogs find a new and loving home.  
**Animal Samaritans / Border Collie Rescue, Round House Hordeley, Craven Arms, Shropshire, SY7 8HT.**  
01588 676106 or text ASMT44E2 to 70070.

**FRENCH BULLDOG** Merl puppies, looking for their forever homes, £1,200. Telephone 07354 751622.

**GOLDEN LABRADOR** Pedigree puppies, dogs and bitches available. £300. 07938 598881.

## GREYHOUNDS MAKE WONDERFUL PETS

All neutered, inoculated and microchipped.  
Call 01902 291080 or visit [www.gtvolwerhampton.co.uk](http://www.gtvolwerhampton.co.uk)  
@gtvolwerhampton

**WANTED** Aviary birds for large private aviary. Also pigeons and poultry for beginner and parrot for house pet. 07970 485491.

**YORKSHIRE TERRIER** Pup, nine weeks old, Mother and Father can be seen. £450. 07920 805120.

## 5 Business & Farming

### Business Opportunities

**READERS** are recommended to take appropriate professional advice before entering into any obligations.



## 6 Property

### Accommodation To Let

**NOTICE TO READERS**  
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments/contracts.

**NOTICE TO READERS**  
It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

**LARGE SELF CONTAINED** studio flat, CH, laundry, car park. Tetterhall Road. 01902 334081.

### Overseas Property

**NOTICE TO READERS**  
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments.

## 7 Jobs

### Part Time - General

**RECEPTIONIST** wanted for Chiropractic Clinic in Wollaston. 13 hours per week. Email CV to janerichardscrawford@gmail.com or call 07966 228901.

## 8 Motoring

### Cars Over £1500



**FORD FOCUS TITANIUM**  
2008. Metallic black, 1.8. Diesel, automatic lights and wipers, Sony Bluetooth audio hands free system.  
96,000 miles.  
Good condition.  
**£1,700 ono.**  
**07976 979507.**

**HAVE YOU CHECKED** your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.



**HYUNDAI AMICA Si 1.0**  
5dr hatchback, X Reg, 2000, yellow, petrol, manual, MoT June 2018, 64,485 miles, good condition, very economical.  
**£650 o.n.o.**  
**07754 263732/01562 243346**

### MUST BE SEEN

**HYUNDAI GETZ CDX**  
2005, silver, 1300cc, petrol, 5dr hatchback, 40,000 miles, electric sunroof.  
**£1,600 o.n.o.**  
**07798 687756**

**4X4**  
**LANDROVER DEFENDER TD5**  
2003 in good condition, MoT June 2018, no problems, excellent motor.  
**£10,000**  
**07766 235306.**

**EXCELLENT CONDITION**  
**PEUGEOT 207 ACCESS**  
1.4, hatchback, 2012, one careful owner from new, 32,000 miles, FSH, 12 months MoT, silver / grey.  
**£3,500.**  
**07757 736435.**



**RENAULT CLIO DYNAMIQUE**  
2008, 51,000 Miles, diesel £30 a year tax electric mirrors, air con, long MoT, central locking, pas, CD, very good condition.  
**£1,999**  
**07879 403302**



**RENAULT TWINGO PZAZ**  
2011, 17,400 Miles, abs, electric windows, electric mirrors, fsh, MoT, central locking, pas, CD, very good condition.  
**£1,999**  
**07879 403302**



**VOLVO S40**  
2007, 57 plate, 30,100 miles, silver, EW, AC, MoT July 2018, automatic, CL, CC.  
Genuine reason for sale.  
**£3,500.**  
**07538 651604.**



**VW GOLF MATCH**  
2014, 14,300 miles, 1.6 diesel, red, 5 door, parking sensors, alloys, lady owner. very economical.  
Exceptional condition inside and out.  
**£9,950**  
**07772 095031.**

### Cars Under £1500

**AUTOMATIC**  
**DIAHATSU (TOYOTA) SIRION 1000CC AUTOMATIC**  
2000, 5-dr hatchback, pensioners car in excellent condition, any test.  
**£1,150 ono**  
**Wolverhampton**  
**07800 637961.**

**FORD FIESTA** 2002, 85,000 Miles, Black, central locking. Excellent runner needing welding to pass MoT. £200 ono 07931797842

**LOW MILEAGE**  
**FORD FIESTA FINESSE**  
2000, 1299cc, petrol, 40,190 miles, 3 1/2 months MoT, one prior owner, good condition.  
**£350.**  
**01902 758966.**



**JAGUAR X TYPE 2.5 2001.**  
97,000 miles. Silver.  
**£700.**  
**JAGUAR S TYPE 2.5 2003**  
51,000 miles. Immaculate, Beige, full leather. **£1,500.**  
**Both Automatic.**  
**01902 739188.**

**BARGAIN**  
**SKODA FELICIA ESTATE**

W reg., 73,000 miles, 4 months Mot, sunroof, new battery and exhaust. Good tyres, good run about.

**Only £275 ono**  
**07972 169554.**

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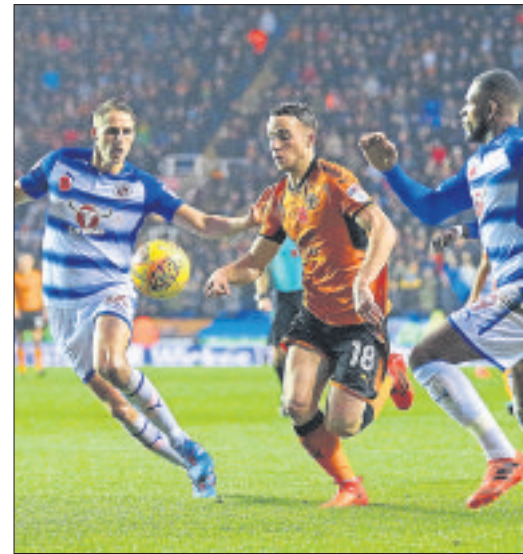




With Wales teammates, from left, Andy King, Johnny Williams and Sam Vokes



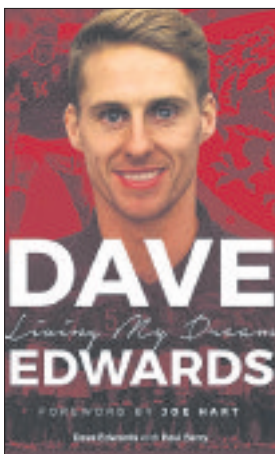
Edwards in action at his first club Shrewsbury



Playing for new club Reading against former team Wolves



Dave Edwards spent nearly a decade at Wolves



The Living the Dream book



Dave as a football-mad schoolboy

# New chapter as Wolves old boy lives the dream

**HE'S made more than 400 professional appearances and helped Wales reach the semi-finals of Euro 2016.**

Now, Wolves favourite Dave Edwards has put pen to paper to document his story and road in his new book, *Living My Dream*.

It all began in rural Shropshire for the former Molineux midfielder, who says he was just a "farm boy" in Shrewsbury when he first kicked a ball.

Now, the 31-year-old has enjoyed a career in which he has been praised by some of the game's greats, with Real Madrid and Wales star Gareth Bale hailing his book "a great read".

All of Edwards' royalties from the book sales, released this month, will go to the Midlands-based Little Rascals Foundation.

Edwards, who recently left Wolves for Reading after nine years in the old gold and black, said: "Being a footballer is a privileged existence – it is one I have never taken for granted and one which has given me some unbelievable experiences."

## Insight

"Hopefully this book will give people an insight into what it means for a farm boy from Shrewsbury to follow his dream, making it both to the Premier League and being part of a Wales squad which reached the semi-finals at their first major tournament in 58 years."

The footballer started his career in the youth set-up at Shrewsbury Town in 1996 where he made more than 100 appearances. After a season at Luton, he was snapped up by then Wolves boss Mick McCarthy in 2008.

*Living My Dream* is described as a "frank and fascinating story" – outlining what it took for Edwards to achieve his life's ambition.

It describes how his dedication and commitment to the game he loves has enabled him to enjoy a successful 16-year career, spanning the top five English divisions from the Conference to the Premier League.

Bale, who played with Edwards at the Euro 2016 competition in France last year, is among the footballers to back the book.

He said: "A fantastic behind-the-scenes insight of

## SPORTING FEATURE

By Tom Oakley

**"Dave is always very interesting and thoughtful with his opinions, and is always happy to front up and face the media and supporters through the good times and the bad."**

what it was like in the Welsh camp at Euro 2016. A special time and a great read."

Woven into the story of his club career, *Living My Dream* is also a behind-the-scenes account of Dave's brave fightback, after a serious injury in January 2016, to make the starting line-up in Wales' opening game in Bordeaux at that summer's European Championships.

He is the first player from the Welsh squad to reveal just what it was like for a player cocooned inside the team bubble at the Euros. He reveals how the Welsh players thrived on and forged an untouchable team spirit.

It tells the story of a family man, who feels fortunate and privileged to have enjoyed the career he has – a "fascinating" insight into the day-to-day life of a professional footballer, according to England goalkeeper Joe Hart and "best mate", who wrote the book's foreword.

Hart said: "Dave Edwards has been one of my best mates in football, all the way through my career and this book offers some great behind-the-scenes insight into what it is like for a player at a major tournament, and some of the secrets behind Wales' spectacular success."

The book, written with the help of Wolves' head of media Paul Berry, is set to be released this month.

It has been published by St Davids Press, [www.st-davids-press.wales](http://www.st-davids-press.wales)

Berry said it was a privilege to work with Edwards. "Like so many football fans, I thought the story of Wales at Euro 2016, their first major tournament for 58 years, was a fantastic one to follow," he said.

"It was made even more interesting having worked with Dave for so many years at Wolves, as well as Wayne Hennessey and Sam Vokes."

"All three of those players were great to work with, and the sort of characters whom you always want to be successful. The further the tournament went on, the more I thought that the idea of a book telling the behind-the-scenes story would be one which would appeal to all football fans."

After Edwards returned from France, over a spell of about six months, him and Paul had regular conversations at the training ground to put together an account of life at Euro 2016.

This included chats about the rest of his career leading up to the tournament, including his recovery from the injury which for a time put his participation in doubt.

## Foundation

He added: "Dave is one of those footballers who is always very interesting and thoughtful with his opinions, and is always happy to front up and face the media and supporters through the good times and the bad."

"He had also kept a journal during the tournament, which provided a really good foundation for that section of the book."

"For me it was a privilege to listen to Dave talk so openly and honestly about life as a professional footballer, and that journey through so many ups and downs to turning out on the biggest stage of all at the European Championships."

"Along with the behind-the-scenes account of what it was like for the Welsh squad at Euro 2016, there are several chapters devoted to Dave's club career with both Shrewsbury and Wolves, and hopefully plenty of stories which fans will enjoy reading."

"It was a fascinating insight into the life of someone whom, by his own admission, made the absolute most out of the talent at his disposal and has, as the title suggests, lived his dream!"

## Fundraising boxing nights a real winner

CHARITY boxing nights in Wolverhampton have proved a real knockout with more than £2,000 being raised.

Kaos Kickboxing coach Dylan Fitzpatrick has organised the events to raise money for the Deanesley ward at New Cross Hospital. Five such events have been held so far, the latest in November, featuring 11 bouts, and more are planned next year.

Dylan began the nights in memory of his late grandmother Mary Scott, who died of cancer at the age of 91 two years ago, before she was due to be admitted to the ward. However he has since set out to raise as much as he can for the staff.

Kaos Kickboxing operates from a church hall, in Owen Road, Wolverhampton. Fight nights are staged at Jacks Bar, in Frederick Street.

The next fundraiser is on March 24. Sign up nights are on January 2 and 22. To register, or for tickets, contact [kaoskickboxing@hotmail.com](mailto:kaoskickboxing@hotmail.com) or call 07772 658708.

## Pathway to success for handball girls

GIRLS' handball is enjoying a boom with the formation of a new club thanks to funding from Cameron Homes. The club, based at Chase Terrace Technology College in Burntwood, will provide 13-to-17-year-old girls a pathway to develop from a beginner to playing for another of the clubs Cameron support – Cannock Olympia and Sutton Coldfield-based side B73.

Nenad Popovic, the Midlands Academy manager for England Handball and former head of PE at Cardinal Griffin School, Cannock, said: "We had a good boys' handball team and girls wanted to play. They initially trained with the boys before playing themselves and they went on to win the under-16s National Schools Championships."

"Cameron have given us £45,000 over three years to develop girls handball and we now have 15 schools involved, and recently had our finals at Aldersley Stadium where 1,000 players were involved."

Cannock Olympia and B73 are expected to benefit from the new club. Anyone interested can email [scoreuk@gmail.com](mailto:scoreuk@gmail.com)

## Sports groups open to share of cashpot

YOUNG sporting individuals and clubs can win a share of more than £600,000 in the Healthy Communities Scheme run by Persimmon Homes.

The programme was launched in May and closes at the end of December. It is part of a national initiative to give away cash to sports groups and individuals. A host of regional prizes of £750 are up for grabs every month, with amateur sports teams and individuals aged 21 years and under eligible. The money is to be spent on sports kit, equipment, coaching or facilities.

A shortlist of 30 will be drawn up in January from all the entries nationwide. They will go forward to a national final to be determined by public vote. The winning club or individual will receive £200,000 with £50,000 each going to two runners-up.

Persimmon Homes West Midlands, which has its headquarters in Wolverhampton, has chosen individuals and clubs from its region, including Gornal Athletic Mini Minor Kickers and a Stourbridge archer.

To enter visit [www.persimmonhomes.com/charity](http://www.persimmonhomes.com/charity)





## Glassboys on the road for Trophy clash

STOURBRIDGE travel to Leamington for the FA Trophy First Round proper on Saturday – and are looking to put on a coach for supporters.

The coach will run from the War Memorial Ground at 12.30pm, subject to demand. Seats can be booked by contacting Jim McComish on 07966 568767 after 5pm. Fare is £10, or £5 for under 16s. Bookings must be made by 6pm today (Thursday).

Saturday's league game with Farsley Celtic was called off due to the weather conditions. Meanwhile, club bosses have created a special DVD from last season's FA Cup run – just in time for Christmas.

In a memorable campaign, the Glassboys beat Peterborough Sports, Mick-leover Sports, Ilkeston, Nantwich and Whitehawk to make it through to the second round for the fourth time in six seasons.

A packed War Memorial Ground saw Stourbridge overcome League One side Northampton Town thanks to a late Jack Duggan goal – sending them through to the third round for the first time in the club's history.

Dan Scarr's goal at League Two Wycombe put Glassboys on level terms before a late Adebayo Akinfenwa header broke Stour hearts and denied and denied Gary Hackett's men a replay.

Fans can now relive the two historic fixtures against Northampton and Wycombe with both games, in full, featuring on the DVD, put together by Black Country Video and priced at £9.95. The DVDs are in stock now at the club shop.

## Dan's the man to have an extended stay at Chairboys

FORMER Stourbridge player Dan Scarr will spend the rest of the season on loan at Wycombe Wanderers from Birmingham City.

The 22-year-old defender joined Blues in January after impressing during the Glassboys' run to the FA Cup third round last term – scoring in a 2-1 loss at Adams Park.

He joined The Chairboys on loan in August and, after 13 appearances for Gareth Ainsworth's side, has impressed enough to see his stay there extended.

The boyhood Blues fan is yet to play a first team game at St Andrew's, but he was a regular for their under-23s before joining Wanderers. "We are delighted to have extended Dan's loan with us until the end of the season," said Ainsworth.

"He has proved himself to be an important member of our squad and having him as part of our plans for the second half of the season will give us a big boost for the run-in.

"He's a player with a lot of ability and a fantastic attitude. This loan will continue to be a great step for him in terms of his development."

## Winning points are earned the hard way

STOURBRIDGE Chess Club faced Greenlands in Worcestershire Division 2 and looked the better side. Jeremy Humphries was first to finish with a win, but this was followed by a loss on board 1.

Meanwhile, Julie Wilson had a poor position and was a piece for a pawn down on board 2. Sam Bradley was a pawn up with the bishop pair but the position was blocked and his opponent had some counter-play.

Joe Bombardini looked in trouble, but he played the ending better than his opponent and Stourbridge led 2-1. Bradley was still ahead by

a pawn but the game remained finely balanced. Wilson, though, got out of jail, won the game and won the match. So with the match decided Bradley shook hands on a draw. Stourbridge had made hard work of it, but had the two points.

Monday's more important match was the Wolverhampton Division 2 clash between the B team and promotion dark horses Boldmere.

The A team had scraped a draw there earlier this season and Boldmere were weaker for their return trip. SCC's B team are decent and Eric Horwill had an early draw. Richard Wilkinson

entered a same colour bishop ending with at least five pawns each, but he had about 50 minutes more than his opponent. He pushed for the win but had to accept a draw. Colin Woodall also got a draw on board 6, followed by a loss on board 2. It was all down to Martin Berridge against Arthur Kent and John Foxall who was black against Tony Hickey and outgraded by about 30 points.

Both won, meaning a great win for the B team that could see them aim for a top half finish. The A team may have one less promotion challenger to worry about.

# BYFIELD LOOKS TO FIND FEET

**SUPER featherweight Les Byfield is finding his quick feet once more as he targets an eighth consecutive professional boxing victory.**

Byfield takes on former sparring partner Andy Harris at Walsall FC's Stadium Suite on Sunday and has been putting in extra training to bring back his lightning-quick feet he was so well known for on the amateur scene.

The 30-year-old from Netherton, fights Harris in his first six-round bout as part of BCB Promotions' 'Jingle All The Way' event. Byfield knows what a tough customer "Thunder" is from their hours of sparring and hopes his high work-rate will carry him through all six rounds.

"Since I have turned pro I have slowed my feet down a lot and I have been working really hard in my sessions to try and speed them back up," said Byfield. "Before I went pro, one of my biggest attributes was that I had really fast feet so I have been working a lot to try and get those back.

### Heavier

"This will be my first six-round so it will be my aim to last the six rounds with Andy. With him being a little bit heavier than me I am guessing it will go the distance," he said.

"I know Andy is a very good boxer and I sparred with him when I first went pro so I am expecting this to be a very tough fight."

Jingle All The Way also features Walsall's Rachel Ball who makes her professional boxing debut at the top of the bill. The Aldridge featherweight turns over from kickboxing where she achieved world honours. She is joined by Birmingham welterweight Kane Baker and Ledbury super lightweight Alex Florence.

Standard tickets for Jingle All The Way, are £35 and VIP tickets at £60 for tables of 10, with a hot Christmas buffet. They are available by calling the boxers or Walsall FC box office on 01922 651414/416.

## Thrown up on opposite sides



Tipton's Scott Baker is making his debut in the BDO world darts championship

TIPTON duo Scott Baker and Jamie Hughes have landed on opposite sides of the draw for the 2018 BDO World Championship.

The Black Country throwers can't toe the oche together until, at least, the semi-finals at Lakeside. The BDO tournament will take place in Frimley Green from January 6-14, live on Channel Four and BT Sport.

Debutant Baker will be up against Belgium's Andy Beaton in a first-to-three sets tie in round one. Third seed Hughes, a two-time semi-finalist, will be eyeing up a potential last four rematch with holder Glen Durrant, who

beat him at the same stage last time. Yozza's first opponent will be the winner of the preliminary round tie between Canada's David Cameron and German Open qualifier Michael Unterbuchner.

Meanwhile, Hughes reached the semi-finals of the BDO Funder Masters last weekend.

At the Hotel Zuiderduin in Egmond aan Zee, Holland, Hughes beat both Dutchman Wouter Vaes and Dean Reynolds 5-1 in Group F.

In a best-of-five format, he then beat Wesley Harms 3-0 but lost in a decider to Jim Williams, who then lost to Danny Noppert.

## Montserrat international joins Exodus

THERE is an Exodus at Halesowen Town – but without any players leaving.

The Yeltz have strengthened their back line with the signing of 6ft 5ins ex-Glassboy Exodus Geohaghton.

Geohaghton, who spent time in his youth at West Bromwich Albion, has Football League experience with Peterborough United, as well as with loan spells at Rotherham United, Shrewsbury Town and Port Vale.

Outside the League, he has played for Sutton Coldfield, Bromsgrove, Redditch and Kettering, as well as Barnet, Darlington, Dagenham & Redbridge and Mansfield Town, where he won the Conference title in 2012. The much-travelled player has been at Worcester City, Braintree, Solihull Moors and Nuneaton Town, later representing Whitehawk, Stourbridge, Torquay United and Nuneaton Town as a player-coach.

Also signing on is Montserrat international striker Spencer Weir-Daley, who has scored 13 times in 21 games for Redditch United this season.

Starting his career at Nottingham Forest, the 32-year-old has also played for Notts County, AFC Telford, Boston United, Corby Town, Kettering Town and Hedgesford Town before signing for Redditch in July 2017. He has played twice for Montserrat and has made 350-plus appearances in all, scoring more than 140 goals.

Saturday's game against Nantwich Town was called off and has yet to be rearranged.

## England u-19s call for cricketer Finch

STOURBRIDGE cricketer Adam Finch has been selected for England's squad for the Under-19 World Cup which starts in New Zealand next month.

Finch, aged 17, is one of the youngest players in the squad and will be joined by Worcestershire team-mate Dillon Pennington. Also included is Warwickshire opener Liam Banks.

Warwickshire's former England batsman Jonathan Trott will be England's batting coach for the tournament.

He said: "I enjoyed working with the Lions and am looking forward to getting out there for the u-19s World Cup and helping the guys to hopefully to do well."

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